

MILITARY Miniatures

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ IN REVIEW ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Volume One, Number One

Final Quarter, 1993

Tamiya's All New Tiger II and... A Report on the Chicago Model Hobby Show

All New
Features And
Sections



The DML Maus German Heavy Tank
The Kirin Grille Self Propelled Gun, and more!

Book Services Menu

The following are served with a generous portion of quick service and a dash of limited availability. Order early to avoid disappointment. Reservations are excepted by phone or fax and will reserve your title(s) for 7 days. This is not a "stockless" system. We will special order titles if they are available to us. All orders are pre-paid and we can not yet accept credit cards. All books are soft cover unless noted otherwise. Bon Appetite!

Panzers at Samur, Number 1 (revised)

Slightly revised version of the original. A few more pictures of the King Tiger. Still the best reference around on the King Tiger. Also covers the Jagdtiger and the Lynx. Japanese and English text. 60 pages.
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Panzers at Samur, Number 2

More of the Samur vehicles. Excellent close-ups and drawings. Covers the Panther, Jagdpanther, Bergepanther and the Panzer Werfer. Also contains a brief study of Panzer crew uniforms. 60 pages. Japanese and English text.
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Volume 1, Tiger I

Volume 2, Sturmgeschutz

Volume 3, 250/251 Halftracks

Volume 4, Panzer IV

Volume 5, Panther

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No. 9, The Battle for Moscow

No. 10, The Battle for the Reich-Alled battles for Germany

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Each issue covers intensely, the uniforms and weapons of each subject. Full color photographs of *every* piece of equipment and uniform item. All volumes priced separately.
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No. 2, British Airborne in Normandy

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Volume 3, Panzer III List \$29.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: \$24.00

Volume 4, Panzer IV List \$29.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: \$24.00

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These video tapes are each compilations of German wartime propaganda newsreels. Each tape retains the authentic German narration. Many types of weapons and uniforms are shown. All the images are clear and low grain. A highly interesting and informative reference source. VHS format.

Blitzkrieg! Germany conquers France, May-June 1940

Third Reich: 1944 "The Desperate Days"

Third Reich: 1945 "The Desperate Days"

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Make all items payable to:

Ampersand Publishing, Inc.

21045 Commercial Trail

Boca Raton, Florida 33486-1006

(407) 393-6020 • Fax (407) 393-0027

M-F 9:00-5:30 EST, Fax 24 hours.

MiniaturesTM

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ON THE COVER:

The all new Tamiya Tiger II. Don't be fooled by this one, it has nothing to do with the older kit. Tamiya has produced and all new, scale replica of the legendary WWII battle tank. Review on page 18.

From Your Editor



We're late! As you might have realized, this issue is reaching you late. I humbly offer two explanations: 1) it took us a while to find the appropriate schedule for MMiR's release. When we introduced MMiR in Atlanta, we wanted that to be a "preview" release of sorts, with the "official" release date being August 15th, 1993. To be quite frank, I wasn't quite sure if we would go ahead with the magazine at all, considering the risks and the potential of lukewarm response.

But boy, have you responded. We have reached our target number of subscribers and we are going ahead.

Some of you may have noticed that your checks took a while to get back to your respective banks. This is because we wanted to be sure that we didn't take money from *anybody* before we knew for sure that we could deliver a product.

Reason number 2: We decided to hold this issue in order to be able to include a feature on the Chicago Model Hobby Show. This show is a big deal in the industry, along the lines of the Nuremberg and Tokyo shows, and we just knew y'all would want to know what you will be blowing your money on in the upcoming year.

We attempt to get cute

Well, away we go! Welcome to Volume 1, Number 1. You'll notice a few differences in our format. We are continually refining the look of this rag and in this issue we attempt to get cute with various new graphic features. We also debut some of our

regular features like *Short Takes* and *The Mail Sack*. The Mail Sack is sort of self-explanatory. Short Takes is a new feature that will offer a look around various aspects of the hobby, like video's, book reviews and new products that we haven't had time to review extensively. We'll also look at products that don't really warrant a full-blown review, like accessories or decals.

Short Takes will also feature guest editorials. This quarter, we hear from noted helicopter guru Pete Harlem. Did you say "Helicopters?" Relax. Read the editorial. You'll like it. This is an important new wrinkle in our hobby.

Another new feature is *advertisers*. Yes, advertisers. "Does this mean you guys have sold out?" Not quite. We have set aside a small number of our pages for advertising. But by advertising we are, in effect endorsing the products we advertise. In other words, we stand behind those products. We will not advertise any product that we don't think is any good.

We have shifted around some of the features seen in the Pilot Issue. Missing in this issue specifically is "The Real Thing." We haven't done away with it. There isn't really anything publishable on the Maus, and we didn't think we could show you anything you hadn't seen a hundred times on the Tiger II. We do include some tasty shots of the real Grille within its review.

Look for *The Real Thing* to return in February.

German Schmerman

In this issue, we're mostly German. Don't panic if you are a modern armor fan. As our Pilot Issue contained mostly modern subjects, the most significant releases this quarter were German. We will be more diversified as we go through the year, and we have many exciting features planned. By the way, our release dates for the balance of Volume 1 are: February 15th, May 15th, and August 15th. Volume 2 will start with the November 15th issue and so on.

Finally I'd like to offer my sincerest thanks to those who took a chance on us. Rest assured, myself and my staff take quite seriously our commitment to bringing you this product on a regular basis. We're glad you took the chance, we like doing this!

Happy Holidays and a prosperous New Year.

Pat Stansell
Publisher

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Best Christmas Cookies

Take one package of Duncan Hines Chocolate Chip Cookie mix and mix in an extra half cup of semi-sweet chocolate chips, a half cup of walnuts and a tablespoon of cinnamon.

MILITARY MINIATURES IN REVIEW is published by Ampersand Publishing Company, Inc. 21045 Commercial Trail, Boca Raton, Florida 33486.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: U.S.; \$17.95 for 4 quarterly issues. Individual issues; \$4.95. Foreign post offices please inquire for rates. Dealer inquiries welcome.

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MILITARY MINIATURES IN REVIEW will only return material if return postage is included with submission. MILITARY MINIATURES IN REVIEW is not responsible for damage which occurs in the mailing process.

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Created and printed in U.S.A.


Ampersand
Publishing
COMPANY, INC.

The Mail Sack



We Toot Our Own Horn

I didn't make it to the Atlanta IPMS Nationals this year, but my friends who did brought back a copy of MMiR. This is a very nice

start for a new mag and I want to give you encouragement to keep it going. We military miniature types need something without all the aircraft clutter. You are very welcome on the scene. Go to it!

—Paul E. Hanson



I read my friend's Pilot Issue of your magazine, which impressed me to no end. It's great to see a publication that puts out an objective, open-minded view of a model, rather than placing it on a pedestal or damning it to the infernal regions. I'm glad to see a magazine that hits the nail on the head.

I served twenty years on tanks in the Army, and I am presently a test driver at Aberdeen Proving Grounds. During the whole of this time I have been building armor models. Having a good source of information on what's new, its good and not-so-good points, and corrective actions which can be taken comes to be a very useful tool in this hobby.

—Stu Minton



I would like to congratulate you on the quality of Military Miniatures in Review. I received my Inaugural Issue only 5 days after I ordered it. The articles were excellent as was the layout of the magazine. I particularly liked the MMiR RECCE and "The Real Thing" features. I found the magazine to be superior to other publications on the market. A publication devoted solely to armor kits and their quality was desperately needed. I don't know how many times I have read articles about the merits of a model only to discover when I purchased the kit that major work was needed to make the model accurate. I hope that this idea takes off.

—Matthew Schmidt



I just received my first issue of Military Miniatures in Review, and boy was I

impressed. You guys have done a fine job. Your mag contains two things I always look for: lots of photos and lots of words. So many other magazines write less so they can fit more ad space. It's good to see just the opposite. I also enjoyed your relaxed attitude and good sense of humor. So many people take this hobby way too serious. Keep up the good work.

—Russell J. Hammond



Thanks for the inaugural issue of "MMiR." Although my armor interests are confined to WWII German vehicles, I was very impressed with the quality of the reviews and the detailed model photography. I am somewhat concerned that you may tire of turning out stuff of this caliber, issue after issue, but we'll see. I'm as "press-byopic" as the typical mid-leaguer but I'd suggest you consider a significantly smaller typeface if you're going to expand your coverage to the degree you state. A bit more careful proofreading might also be helpful.

Even though they have been out for a while, I'd bet that at least some of your readers would appreciate seeing detailed reviews of Tamiya's Tiger I and 251 D series. Also, since photo-etched (unlike resin) parts are being seen even in some mainstream kits, perhaps a general article on techniques with a sidebar comparing various manufacturers would be of interest to those who may have fallen behind the current technology. The same would apply to multi-part track sets.

Thanks again and good luck with "MMiR."

—Jon H. Randolph



Thanks everyone, for all your notes and letters. Unfortunately, we can't answer each and every letter. But, rest assured that we read everything we get.

The bulk of our mail has been overwhelmingly positive. So far so good. The most prevalent criticism was on the spelling, so we are presently smacking around the proof readers. The visual refinement of a publication like MMiR is ongoing, so each issue will reflect minor enhancements—this issue being no exception.

We don't think we will ever tire of putting out what we think is quality material. Our biggest problem is trying to pick and choose what material will appear. The quarterly format restricts

us to a limited number of articles per year. We will attempt to cover areas of general interest as well as those areas which we feel are most timely.

Big Block Boo-Boo

Congratulations to a well laid-out magazine. The 3rd ACR received the last of their MIA HA's with bigfoot tracks approximately 4 hours before Desert Storm began. In my book on the 3rd ACR, I have documented photos taken by SFC. Rick Hunt showing the bigfoot track in use.

I would appreciate it if you could print this corrected information concerning the DML MIA1 in an upcoming issue.

—Christopher M. Mrosko



Thanks for that information Chris. We stand corrected. We originally got that tidbit of information about the big block tracks from an officer in the 24th Mech. While standing next to their MIA1 HA's (which were entrained for deployment) he remarked that they did not make it into the fray. This was true for the 24th, but not apparently for all armored units in the Gulf.



Got A Problem with any of this?

We'll write to us, dammit! Send those comments to: *Mail Sack, Military Miniatures in Review, 21045 Commercial Trail, Boca Raton, Florida 33486-1006.*

Notice

Some of you may have noticed that in our promotional flyer, we stated that the cost of a Pilot Issue and a subscription was \$25.50. As some of you figured out, the actual cost is \$24.40. Those responsible for this glitch have been sacked. As an additional precaution, those responsible for sacking those who were sacked... have been sacked as well. We regret the error.

Those of you who overpaid have a standing credit for \$1.10 on your individual accounts. We can issue a refund, apply it towards your renewal, or apply it towards the purchase of an item from the Book Services Menu. ☺

Guest Editorial

*1/35 Scale
Helicopters:
What's Going On?*

In the last year we have seen several companies initiate what appears to be a line of helicopter

kits aimed at the military vehicle modeler and not oriented to the airplane boys. By picking 1/35 scale, these manufacturers are making a clear statement that they want to sell these things to people like you, dear reader. MRC is the first to jump in with both feet and the box of their first release, a fine AH-1W Super-Cobra in Desert Storm rig, proudly states that this is modeling "In The Correct Scale."

For me, a long-time armor builder and long-time helicopter modeler, the marriage is long overdue and most welcome. The question is, will these flying machines be acceptable to the average armor modeler, a person who shuns aircraft because of bad treatment at the hands of snobbish airplane modelers? Airplane modelers themselves tend to shun helicopters and they definitely take a dim view of a new scale (for them). They are used to building in 1/32 even though it is not supported in rotary wing to any extent except by Revell, and Revell hasn't had a new kit in large size for a long time. That is about to change.

So what's going on here? Well, you can expect in the near future, a rash of 1/35 scale helicopter kits. MRC claims to be the first, but the scale has had rotors before. Many years ago, Otaki released a model of the Doman YH-31A helicopter in 1/35. The kit is a collectors item now and very rare in this country. I doubt you can find two people who know what a Doman YH-31 is (the US Army bought several prototypes and two were used as VIP hacks around Washington, D.C.), and finding a kit is near to impossible.

The second helicopter kit produced in 1/35 scale is the aged kit by Heller (sold under Aurora also) of the Aerospatiale SA-321 Super Frelon. This wonderfully complicated and accurate kit of the French equivalent of the Sikorsky CH-53 used to include several sprues of Heller's modern French Infantry, which meant you could

build a real large diorama using this one kit. Heller clearly tried to sell the Frelon (*Hornet* in French) to the military vehicle crowd. Heller was, perhaps, years ahead of its time, but happily you can still buy this kit, albeit now in Naval ship hunter form.

Now, we have MRC jumping in with both feet. The AH-1W kit is out already and we will soon have a Korean war vintage Bell H-13D. One of my spies tells me the H-13 also includes windcreens for the stretchers and a M-2 .30 cal. MG armament system. The only figure given is the pilot who is molded in Korean war uniform and hat. MRC planned to follow with a UH-1B Huey gunship (yes! yes! yes!) but I have it on good authority that there are problems with the mold for this kit.



DML's OH-6A Loach

The folks at MRC are working on the problem, so maybe it will become available by the time you read this.

DML has had a kit of the Hughes OH-6A "Loach" in their ads for some time. The box art shows markings for Capt. Hugh Mills' sharkmouthed Loach named "Miss Clawed" from Charlie Troop, 16th Cav Regiment in Vietnam. The kit is supposed to include crew figures, and I'm told that it will have a shrunk down version of the new Kirin release of a 120mm Army helicopter pilot admiring a hole in his flight helmet. Presumably the other figure will be the Oscar (Observer/Crew Chief) who flies as the aircraft's gunner. I've seen a test shot of the fuselage sprues for this kit and it looks competent. It did include a minigun, but the parts I saw did not include cockpit armor plates or the Oscar's M-60 machine gun. Hopefully, these omissions will be remedied when the kit is finally released. DML has also announced the release of the MD-500 "Defender" version of the Loach. So you Grenada buffs may soon be able to build a Little Bird MH-6D from the 160th Aviation

Regiment, the "Night Stalkers."

Surprisingly, we now have Revell-O-Gram (my name for the Revell-Monogram joint deal) changing their support for 1/32 scale helicopters by releasing, early in 1994, a 1/35th scale model of the Bell H-13H Sioux. They have it advertised as a M.A.S.H. helicopter with a clear connection to the old TV show, but the H-13H did not enter Army service until 1956, several years after the real Korean war ended. Actually, the modeler is better off for this error, because the H-13H is one of the more prolific Bubble-Bells and was even used in Vietnam. It was sold internationally and even built under license in several countries, so marking choices are vast. Since MRC is already doing the older version of the Bell, you will be able to pick which model suits your needs.

Revell's Bell provides a pilot figure and stretcher panniers, and they have announced a diorama kit to go with the M.A.S.H. theme. The M.A.S.H. diorama set includes figures, tent and a jeep. It will be interesting to see if the jeep is the old Monogram one or something new.

So that's what's new in the scale for now. Look for built-up reviews of the AH-1W and MRC H-13D in future issues of MMiR.

Until then, please do consider that the kit makers are trying to whet your appetite with these releases. They are certain that the kids will not suffer from the "aircraft are not my bag" syndrome, but they will need some support from you old dyed-in-the-wool treadheads. In the formative days of U.S. Army air mobility, the young buck aviators flying the first Hueys and such, were forced by their leaders to call Army helicopters "air vehicles." This was done to get everyone to realize that the Army helicopter was not an "aircraft" per se, but was instead a true member of the ground forces. The scout helicopters were equated with armed jeeps and armored cars, the troop carriers equated with trucks and halftracks, and the gunships equated with tanks and artillery. Tactical concepts came right from the WWII CCA and CCB methods used by armored divisions. In other words, helicopters are not airplanes. Not now, not ever. Get the point? MRC, DML, and Revell are betting on it.

—Pete Harlem

Book Reviews

Panther and Its Variants
Sturmgeschütz and Its Variants
Panzer III and Its Variants
by Walter J. Spielberger
published by Schiffer
Publishing, Pennsylvania

SCHIFFER PUBLISHING IN THE U.S. HAS REPRINTED, in English, the well known Walter Spielberger books on German armor of World War Two. This is not exactly news to most modelers, since the first of them (Tiger) has been available for some time and the



following three have been around since June. What might be news to most readers, is that the text is just about as interesting as the famous photos.

Unless you could read German all those long words were just so much curious gibberish. Well, monoglossalists rejoice, the fascinating story of these vehicles can now be read.



Much of what you read will fall on the slightly boring side. Mr. Spielberger discusses absolutely *everything* regarding the develop-

ment and subsequent refinement of the various vehicles. The impression one derives from this is how hamstrung German weapons programs were by the extensive Nazi bureaucracy.



There are some very interesting factoids to be found in these most recent releases. Among them:

Panther;

■ The Panther was scheduled to be manufactured in Italy by the Italian Automotive company, Fiat. Plans were well under way at the time of the Italian capitulation.

■ The Japanese were also planning to build the vehicle, and had purchased a Panther (and a Tiger). There is no mention of their delivery.

■ The French equipped a substantial portion of their immediate post war tank force with the Panther and the Jagdpanther. They were apparently not too impressed—they put the Panther's useful road life at 150 km!

■ A Panther was delivered to the Swedish government.

■ The Luftwaffe received 75 Panthers in 1944. **Panzer III;**

■ The Panzer III saw post-war use in Norway, Denmark and Finland, where the Finnish Army used it until 1966.

■ Turkey took delivery of 56 tanks in 1943.

■ Because of its favorable power-to-weight ratio, turretless Panzer IIIs were used as temporary locomotives in Germany's post-war rail yards.

Sturmgeschütz;

■ One curious photo caption explains how a B model was retrofitted with a Saukopf mantlet and later knocked-out in the Normandy battles.

■ In the lists of foreign countries who received the Sturmgeschütz, there is an "unknown" country which received 2 Ausf F/8s. Since all other foreign countries (Spain, Hungary, Rumania, etc.) are accounted for in this list, it would be interesting to know who it was that took delivery and what eventually became of the vehicles.

■ Extensive information on various recovery vehicles, including Bergepanzer III, the Famo 18t half-track and, interestingly, the Bergepanzer IV, of which 5 were in service as of January 1945.

Along that last vein, you'll find lots of seemingly unrelated information in these volumes. Another case it point is the description of the 250/21 "Uhu" Infra-red half-track in the Panther book.

All these books will be welcome additions to any reference library. Highly recommended.

Leichte Jagdpanzer
Entwicklung-Fertigung-Einsatz
by Walter J. Spielberger
Motorbuch Verlag 1993



FOLLOWERS OF THE SERIES will not be disappointed by this latest release from Dr. Spielberger (look for *Schwere Jagdpanzer* also coming soon). Covering the development of the Hetzer light tank destroyer, this book is crammed with photos and drawings. There really has not been much material available on the Hetzer for modelers. This book has many photos of the interior of the vehicle not seen before. The release of the book is very fortuitous considering the recent release of Cromwell Models 1/15th scale

Hetzer. This model is cavernous in 1/15th scale and begs for an interior. A happy coincidence for Cromwell and Hetzer fans in general. Buy this book. Highly recommended.

Tiger I, 1942-1992
by Bruce Culver & Uwe Fiest
Ryton Publishing



THE DEFINITIVE reference on the Tiger. The ultimate reference on the Tiger. The most incredible...

The most amazing... Yes, they all apply. If you are a German armor fan, run, do not walk to your nearest dealer and get this book. Quite literally stuffed with photos and drawings of all the variants of Tiger, this publication will occupy a coveted space on your shelf for years to come. The book covers all phases of the tank's development and deployment. All areas are covered and text and captions are very thorough. The book is capped off with an interesting interview of Oblt. Otto Karius of 3/sPzAbt. 502. Early copies were signed and numbered and included a color illustration by Uwe Fiest of Herr Karius atop his mount.

According to the distributors we spoke with, the numbered copies went out the door very fast. The book was a limited production run, so therefore is technically "out of print" but shops and distributors should still have stocks for awhile. The price is stiff (around a hundred bucks or so), but to own a little bit of history like this, it's cheap. Go get it.

How To Paint Realistic Military Figures
by Lynn Kessler and Don Winar
Kalmbach Publishing



MANY MODELERS REGARD figures with a certain degree of mystic. Creators of beautiful armor models balk at the very idea of painting a figure. Isn't a figure just a smaller model?

This mystic is cleared away with this new release from Kalmbach Publishing. This is the latest in the long running series of how-to's from Kalmbach, most well known for its publication of *Fine Scale Modeler*.

This book covers all facets of figure painting and construction. We liked its simple approach to the subject. It seems to be aimed at the beginner, but those with some experience will still pick up a few tips.

The painting guides put a big emphasis on the use of acrylics, which is a medium already familiar to most modelers. The guides cover specific areas like: Middle Ages; Napoleonic; WWII and modern day. Whole chapters are devoted to the painting of Napoleonic and camouflage uniforms. There are also special sections on metallic finishes.

Recommended to all who are looking to improve their figure painting skills.



What's on the Tubage

A COUPLE OF INTERESTING TID-BITS ARE FOR THE "Military-Minded" are bopping about this winter. **Fields of Armor** is a multi-part program being broadcast on *The Discovery Channel*. This series analyzes the impact that the AFV had on 20th century history. Presented with interviews and documentary footage, the shows are entertaining if not entirely accurate. You will see Soviet BT-7s burning in the episode on the Battle of France, and there is some rather biased retrospectives on the various battles. All-in-all the series is worth a look. Check your local listings for times and days.

Fields of Armor is available for purchase on tape. Those interested should contact: **Fields of Armor**, P.O. Box 68618, Indianapolis, ID 46268. Or call: 1-800-635-4000.

Public Television's **Masterpiece Theater** picks up another military theme. Some may remember the earlier series based around a group of RAF pilots in the Battle of Britain. This time the multi-part series centers on the famous Sharp's Rifles of the Napoleonic era. This fictionalized account revolves around Mr. Sharp himself and his lusty band of English riflemen. Hey, it's T.V. remember? Check your local listings.

Last year's theatrical release, **A Midnight Clear** is now available on tape. This is the story of a U.S. recon platoon (or what's left of it) and their experiences around the time of the Ardennes offensive. A very authentic, and sometimes surreal look at

combat. Might be considered a bit of a downer for the young ones. Check your local video store.



New Products

WE RAN ACROSS **THE MASTER'S HOBBY SUPPLY** recently. They produce some very intriguing decals for German armor fans. Sheet number D100 contains over 300 Army and SS tactical insignia. Sheet #D102 is composed of German Army Panzer Divisional Tactical Insignia, with over 500 various insignia in white, red and yellow. Sheet #D104 is Waffen SS Panzer and Panzergrenadier insignia in white, yellow and black. This last sheet is the smallest, but still it probably has over 150 markings.

All the markings were well formed and the detail was crisp and clean. Each includes a thorough reference sheet and instructions. The amazing thing here is that they are all done with almost no carrier film. The other amazing thing is the price. Sheets D100 and D102 come in at ten dollars, while D104 is only five bucks! Talk about your value for the dollar. Worth checking out.

The Master's Hobby Supply also sells

several different airbrush rigs and other tools. For more information on all the products, contact: **The Master's Hobby Supply**, P.O. Box 81484, San Diego, CA 92138-1484.

For the most extravagant and delightful experience you've had with an armor accessory, check out **Model Friulmodellismo's** line of white metal link-to-link tracks. If you hate L-to-L you'll love these. They work the way an exorbitantly priced accessory is to supposed to work.



We tested the Panzer III/IV 36cm track. First of all, you get enough links to do the entire tank. Then, the center

horns were actually correct. They are molded hollow and are totally realistic. The links themselves are designed to fit together in such way as to completely disguise the assembly point. This also makes them functional. Flash was minimal and the castings were sharp. The down side here is the price. Each set retails for a round \$66.00. Currently in the line are:

Panzer III/IV, 36cm; Panzer III/IV 40cm; Panther (with hollow guide teeth); and T-54/T-55/T-62. A Panzer IV early drive sprocket is also available. We purchased ours from Squadron Mail Order, 1115 Crowley Drive, Carrollton, TX 75011.

We had the chance to take a good (although quick) look at some fresh releases from **Academy/Minicraft**. The following kits arrived in our offices at presstime: a Marine M60A1 with reactive armor (kit #1349), an M113A2 (kit #1354); and a M997 4x4 ambulance (kit #1352). The two armor kits retail for twenty-five dollars and the M997 retails for seventeen.

At a glance, all the kits looked pretty good. We noticed some very nice figures in the M113, along with some interesting accessories like "Evian" style water bottles, molded in clear plastic.

Look for a more in-depth review of each in the coming months.

MB
models, inc.



*1/35th scale
armor kits &
accessories*



German R35 mit 4.7 cm pak Conversion Kit

Conversion kit for the Heller R35. Kit contains resin hollow-molded hull, complete interior, photo-etched brass shields, highly detailed white metal gun, and more! **\$45.00**

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CHICAGO-CHICAGO!

That model'n Town!

Scenes from the Chicago Model Hobby Show, 1993



Tamiya's all new Panther will be an early G model vehicle. As in previous releases, zimmerit coating will not be part of the model.

ABOUT THIS TIME EVERY YEAR Chicago is the scene of the Chicago Model Hobby Show. This is an industry trade show sponsored by RCHTA (Radio Control Hobby Trade Association), which is an association of hobby retailers and wholesalers. Although showcasing many different aspects of the hobby industry, it is where "those in the know" get all the straight skinny on what's new in our hobby. Most of the major armor manufacturers attend to show off their new wares and generally hob-knob with hobby retailers. Our roving reporter snooped around and here's what the big boys had to say:

Argus Specialist Publications

Argus is not a name immediately familiar to most, but they are the publishers of a number of hobby publications, most notably

Military Modeling (that's I-N-G) from the UK. They came shopping for U.S. distributors, so we might see this fine magazine available in a few more places. Also from Argus is a brand new publication called *Regiment* which will be a bi-monthly Militaria reference magazine. Looks intriguing. For more information contact your local bookseller or Argus Specialist Publications, Argus House, Boundary Way, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP27ST.

Azimut Productions

This French company is always (it seems) coming out with tons of neat new stuff. This year is no exception. Hope you're hungry, there's lots on the menu:

German Pak 43 Waffenträger Ardet; the Pak 43 SPG loosely based on the Czech 38t tank. Resin, photo-etched and injection tracks. This full kit will retail for \$99.95 and will pop up in January. German Borgward

IVC Sdkfz 301; the demolition vehicle. Complete kit in resin with metal tracks. About ninety dollars retail, available now. German Heavy Cargo Trailer with cargo set. Large trailer used on supply convoys to the Eastern Front. Resin. \$53.00. German 2cm Flak 38 auf Panzer Ia; conversion kit for 2 plastic kits; the Tamiya flak 38 and the Italeri Panzer I. Includes a complete interior. About forty bucks. German 251/16 Flamethrower; conversion for Tamiya's D model halftrack. Resin and photo-etched brass. Retail about 35 dollars. A German Steyr 1500 Cargo Truck; continues a series of full kits started with the Steyr Command Car. Also available in the ambulance version. Both kits retail for \$99.95.

French VAB 4x4 APC; the modern French vehicle with a complete interior. \$110.00. Russian KV1S; converts the Tamiya

kit to the S-version in resin. \$34.50. A U.S. M31 Recovery Vehicle; conversion kit for the Tamiya Lee. Resin white metal and photo-etch, \$50.00 retail. A U.S. LVT-4; this full kit has been anticipated for some time now. Apparently, the delay will be well worth it, as the kit will eventually be released with injection molded tracks. Cool.

Also in the line are the so-called "MR" series. These are somewhat exotic conversion kits and the subjects are: a Japanese command tank conversion for the Tamiya Type 95 (\$19.95); Two T-80 sets for the DML



The Azimut flak 38/Panzer I.

T-80, one an update set the other a detail set, both around eighteen dollars; and a detail set for the Russian "Zvesda" plastic T-60, \$19.95.

A sub-line of Azimut's, Ironsides, is made up of multi-media kits built around an existing plastic kit with detail and add-ons in brass, resin, aluminum and white metal. New items are: Opel Blitz 4x4 which is the four by four version (duh!) of the well-known German cargo truck. Contains the Italeri kit and resin suspension components.

M4E8; resin tracks and suspension units dress up the Italeri M4. T-66 tracks are represented. Early editions come with a figure. All very spiffy.

R-35, 4.7cm; the German SPG on the French R-35 chassis. Built around the Heller



The Ironsides R-35/4.7, complete kit.

kit, this jewel-like model is molded in resin and comes with Model Kasten tracks.

4.7cm Pak, Panzer I; SPG on the Panzer I chassis. Built around the Italeri kit. Resin.

Renault R-40; mutated version of the French pre-war R-35. Based on the Heller kit.

K-5 Eisenbahn, 280mm Rail Gun; yes, you read it right. A 1/35th scale rail gun. For

the truly demented hobbyist on your Christmas list. Only plans were shown, but the model will no doubt be very nice, very big, and very expensive. No price was available. Think in the \$400.00 range. It was stated to be a limited edition.

Azimut has purchased the entire line of Historex products and will gradually be re-releasing the line including all of the spare parts and accessories. New figures are planned, as is a set of resin character heads. This will undoubtedly be good news for figure builders.

The ADV line of figures boasts several new additions, including a U.S. Combat Team and several nifty French civilians.

AFV Club

This injection plastic company is keeping the pace with a new M102 105mm fieldpiece. This kit contains parts for both modern and Vietnam versions. An aluminum

barrel and real recuperator springs round out the kit. This will look smashing being towed by the M49 truck. Retail will be \$19.98.

Continuing the line of modern trucks is a M49A2C Fuel Tank Truck retailing for \$34.98.

A track set for the M-48/M-60 is also available. This injection molded set contains separate end connectors for all of the links and the completed runs are fully functional. The price on these babies is \$14.98. A very pleasant surprise to those who are used to paying up to thirty dollars for link-to-link tracks.

Concord

The publishing division of DML is starting a series of books which will offer a sequential study of a specified armed force or conflict. The first will be a study of the German Army during the Blitzkrieg. This book will contain about 20 full color illustrations by Ron Volstad. Prices to be announced.

Dragon Models Limited

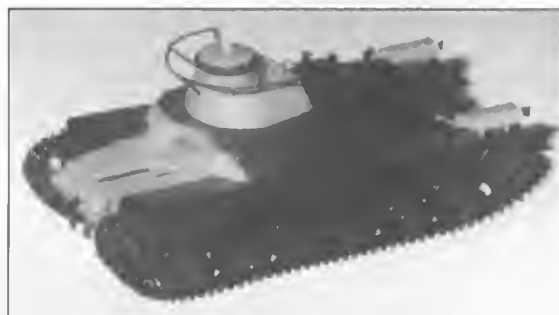
Wow! These guys just don't let up. Their 93/94 release schedule will be aggressive. Up to the plate are: JSII Heavy Tank, a complete kit with link-to-link tracks. Available now, for about twenty five dollars. The ISU-122 will follow in January/February. These are "for real" items—actual built-up plastic kits were made available to be touched and groped.

A SU-76m is on the burner for

December. Produced by DML in cooperation with a Russian based manufacturer, this kit is billed for the serious modeler. The example on display looked pretty cool. We look forward to getting our mitts on the kit.

In the wild and wacky department, DML plans release of a 1/35th V-2 Rocket with launch stand. This thing is big! The model stands about 20 inches high and will undoubtedly be popular with both aircraft and armor buffs. The display model was finished in a Whermacht splinter camouflage pattern. Neato.

DML's excellent figure line marches on with a U.S. Modern Tank Crew, British Modern SAS Team, Vietnam Era Green Berets, German SPG Crew (to keep your Hummel company), and a German 6th Army at Stalingrad set. Only the U.S. Tank crew and Green Berets were on display, but if the other new sets are up to par with previous releases, they will be both an excellent value and loads of fun to build.



The "MR" series Type 95 Command tank.

The 1/35th scale OH-6A Cayuse "Loach" helicopter was also on display and will be available in December. This further propels the trend of 1/35th scale helicopters. A MD-500 defender will follow early next year. Both will be about twenty-nine dollars.

Releases on deck are a L/70 Panzer IV Zwischen Lösung and Sturmgeschutz models B and C/D. No specific release dates were made available on these, other than sometime in 1994. Prices to be announced.

Dremel

Although not entirely new, Dremel was showcasing its top of the line heavy-duty version moto-tool. Aimed at the serious hobbyist, this flex-shaft type tool has a more powerful motor and comes with several different grips and attachments. A foot pedal speed control is available as an option. This will enable the user to slow the tool down much slower than previous speed controls. This would be excellent for working on plastics. The foot pedal also works with other single speed Dremel tools.

Glencoe

The U.S. company Glencoe, has announced a 1/15th scale M-41 Walker Bulldog and a Mechanical Mule in the same scale. The M-41 is stated to be suitable for RC, with gears and axles included. The price of the M-41 before December 31st is about thirty dollars. After that the price rises to approximately forty dollars. The Mule retails for ten dollars.

Gunzye Sangyo

The renowned high-tech company Gunzye Sangyo is at it again with two new armor kits. A Panzer III M/N is due in January, along with a Sturmgeschutz G. Both have added brass spaced armor and the Panzer III has complete turret side armor as well. Stated retail on the Panzer III is \$105.00. The price of the Stug was not yet available, but it should be similar to the Panzer III.

An all new item, the Russian 76.2 mm fieldpiece will be available in December; \$120.00 retail.

The German 10.5 cm fieldpiece will be released in January with wooden spoked wheels and should retail for around \$120.00.

Hasegawa

Known more for aircraft than armor, Hasegawa enters the 1/35th scale scene with a nifty little "high-tech" Kubelwagen. Complete with engine and cold weather windows, two versions will be released. One is the Whermacht standard, while the other is the Afrika Korps version, with the balloon tires. Both kits retail for \$22.50 and will be



Hasegawa's new Kubelwagen.

available in December. This initial release was of a very high standard of quality and we look forward to subsequent efforts.

Humbrol/Airfix/Heller

...have tiptoed back on the armor scene with the re-release of the Airfix 32nd scale Sdkfz. 250 "Rommel's" halftrack and "Monty's Humber" staff car.

Heller has announced six new releases for '94. Most likely, these will be re-releases of some of the older items. This is not exactly bad news, as these have been hard to

find and much sought after. One brand new item rumored to be in the works is the Modern French LeClerc tank.

Kalmbach Publishing

Publishers of *Fine Scale Modeler* and such specialist books as Shep Paine's *How To Build Dioramas* are warming up another title from Mr. Paine. *Building and Painting Scale Figures* should hit the stands in late December. Look for stock number 12119 and a retail price of \$17.95.

Kirin

DML's sister company plans lots of goodies for '94. If you didn't already know it, the Kirin line of products differs from the DML line by being aimed at the more experienced modeler.

Comin' down the pike in November/December: Early Tiger I Conversion; new turret, turret interior, and gun breech along with the fiefel air cleaners and other bits to backdate the new Tamiya kit. The display model was extra spiffy, but we are told that the set will not include roadwheels and tracks. This was apparently done in order to keep the price down to earth. However, the set is sure to be an excellent value at its retail of \$19.98.

A PT-34/54 mine roller will be available in December. This is the later version of the Russian mine clearing device for the T-34/T-44/T-54. This resin, metal, and plastic kit will retail for about twenty dollars.

A conversion kit for AFV's M49 Truck converts that vehicle into the heavily armored Vietnam convoy escort version. Available now for about twenty-eight dollars.

An AAVP-7A2 Up Armor set is available for the Tamiya LVTP. The cost is \$25.98.

A conversion kit for Tamiya's old Centurion kit is available in November. This kit converts the Mark III to the APC version used by the Israelis. The display model included an interior and was very handsome. About forty-three dollars.

A very keen backdate/detail set for DML's Hummel was on display. This set will backdate the kit to the earlier version and contains extra details for the gun compartment. This is an early '94 release, and no price was available at press time.

Three new 1/16th scale figures were displayed. A crouching Fallshirmjäger, a Helicopter Warrant Officer and of course

the beautiful Highland Clansman. All are new additions to the line.

The Kirin line (not to mention the DML line) is known to be a prolific one, so be prepared to be surprised during the year.



The Kirin backdate and detail set for the DML Hummel.

MB Models

This U.S. company was showing off its new Russian 203mm Tracked Howitzer. According to the manufacturer, the master pattern was completely tooled by machine, very much like a plastic kit. Castings of the masters were on display and the results were quite impressive. Both the long and short barreled versions will be available. Look for late December availability and an approximate retail of eighty-dollars.

Available now, but still extra nifty, are JSII Heavy Tank, available in either of two versions, JSII or JSIIIm, this complete kit comes with brass fenders and metal link-to-link tracks, \$130.00. R-35 Pak 4.7 cm conversion kit for the Heller R-35, and the German Ferdinand conversion kit for the Italeri Elephant kit, both \$45.00. The R-35 and Ferdinand both come with interiors.

Minicraft/Academy

This Torrence, California company is known for its relatively low priced, good value kits. Upcoming for them are: M48A5, the Korean version of the Patton; an M997 4x4 Ambulance based on the HUMVEE chassis; an M113-A2 with some surprisingly nice figures; and a USMC M60-A1 with Rise/Passive Armor. All will be available by year's end.

Model Kasten

MK had on display its new KV/JS tracks. These are pinned and functional and were seen mounted on a Tamiya KVII with very good effect. They will retail for approximately sixty dollars.

Osprey Books

Osprey has several new titles due out, among them are: Vanguard number 5, Tiger I; number 6, T-72; number 7, JSII Heavy Tanks; and number 8, British Matilda. Release dates run through January. All will retail for \$11.95.

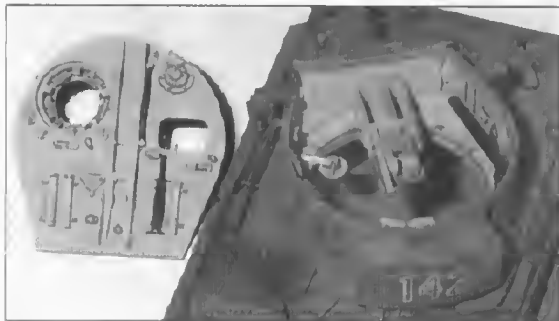
Paache

For those who are concerned about the health hazards connected to airbrushing, Paache is now offering the Hobby Shop Spray Booth. Basically a box with a fan motor, the unit is cleverly designed to force atomized paint and vapor up towards the fan. The example we saw was of sturdy galvanized steel construction, with a heavy-duty type fan assembly. The retail of \$220.00 is not too bad for a tool you might have around your shop for years to come.

The Show Modeling

These well-known producers of photo-etched detail sets from Japan were displaying a number of their recent releases: two new sets for the Tamiya Tiger II (Vols. 1 & 2), about eighteen dollars each; A Panzer IV L/70 set, \$32.00; Tiger IE, \$12.15; Grille detail set, \$23.98; Hummel (Vols. 1 & 2), about twenty-four dollars; and our favorite, a BMW R75 & Zundapp Detail set, \$29.98. New releases scheduled are: Nashorn & Hummel Accurizing Set, Flak 36 88mm, and Ford 3000s Cargo Truck. Prices to be announced.

Show Modeling was also displaying their new zimmerit card sets. These are designed to be glued directly onto the model, and we were, at first, somewhat skeptical. Models with the material applied were on



The Kirin backdate set for the Tamiya Tiger I.

display and the product is actually very nice. All the major surface shapes are represented. The sheets are a paper/plastic composite and conform very well to raised details, etc. Sheets are available for the Tiger I (\$8.98), King Tiger (\$16.50), and Brumbar (\$13.50), and more are planned.

Tamiya America

The Big T is wading back into the armor market with a vengeance. The new Tiger II was on display (which most of you already know about), as was a number of accessory products that are now available for it. An 88mm Projectile Set contains two different types of shells; armor-piercing and high explosive, with empty casings also being provided. The projectiles are all milled from solid brass and are exquisite. Quite a depart-

ture for Tamiya. The rounds will retail for \$13.00. Speaking of departure, a stand-alone Photo Etched Grill Set is number two on the list of Tiger add-on items. The set (it looks like stainless steel) provides all of the anti-grenade screens for one Tiger kit. You also get two nice little sights for the turret AA MG34. The Grill Set will retail for \$11.00. The last item is the Separate Track Links Set, which consists of the now familiar injection molded link-to-link type tracks. The set consists of six of the sprues found in their Tiger II kit, and contains enough links for one vehicle. \$27.00 retail.

The King Tiger, Porsche Turret was on display. This looks like the same all new kit as the Henschel version. The Porsche version will also feature the same detailed turret interior. This item will be available in December and has a retail price of \$47.00.

Remember the days when news of Tamiya's new releases would knock your socks off? Well, our feet are bare again—Tamiya was displaying its all new Panther G. Billed as an early G, it appears this kit will be a real gem. We took a very close look at the display model and it is indeed an all new kit, along the lines of the Tiger I, Tiger II and T-72. The kit appeared to be dimensionally correct and had the correct number of roadwheels (wow!). Look for an early January release. The retail price should be approximately forty-five dollars.

Tamiya has updated its older Type 74 Japanese MBT. This was not too bad a kit originally, and the update brings it up to current standards with new crew figures and other small improvements. The new version retails for thirty dollars. The Type 61 MBT has been revised in a similar fashion. No retail price was immediately available, but it will probably be in line with the Type 74.

Tamiya is putting a big emphasis on its paint and tool lines this year. A professional-style airbrush along the lines of a Badger or Paache shooter, will join its line of tools in 1994. If you are a fan of some, or all these items, they should soon be more widely available.

Tamiya's line of decals has growth to include 4 different sheets. They are: Gulf Operations Sheet; Modern Military Sheet A; and World War II German Decal

Sheets A & B. Both the Gulf and the Modern Military sheets contain markings for several different nationalities. The German sheets (these are two separate sheets) contain dozens of markings, tactical symbols and vehicle names. All these sheets are a superb value at \$8.25.

Given the highly competitive nature of the industry today, Tamiya remains very secretive about its future releases. It is very possible that they could still have a few



Tamiya's Porsche turret version of the King Tiger.

tricks up their sleeves for 1994, so stay tuned...

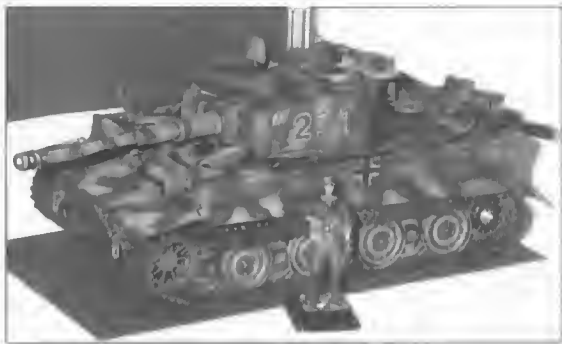
Testors/Italeri

Things have been a little quiet at Testors/Italeri in regards to armor. The Italeri line of products has always been known for its quality and accuracy. The big news for them this past year was the release of the Panzer IV L/70 and the M901 Hammerhead. The big news for us this year is the imminent release of their version of the Panther. This kit was on display, and it is an "A" model vehicle. It appears to be up to previous Italeri standards. The scuttle-butt on this was that it will have a detailed engine compartment and contain parts for both the A and the earlier D model. Pretty cool, huh? The Panther should be available in December and will have a price tag of \$19.75. Also slated for December release are: AD Piranha, \$16.50; Soviet Assault Troops, \$7.75; and a Modern Battle Gear Accessory Set, \$7.00. A M163 AL Vulcan (\$15.50) is scheduled for November release.

There are about eighteen other releases



Italeri's Panther A.



The very big Tiger I E from Verlinden Productions.

scheduled for 1994, but we are not allowed to say exactly what they will be. Some are re-releases of older items, but about half are all new items. We can say this: there is something on the list for just about everybody.

Verlinden Letterman & Stok

Unless you've been living in a biosphere for the last six or seven years, the VLS name will definitely ring a bell. One of the largest distributors of armor, aircraft and plastics in the U.S., they are also the exclusive distributors of the Verlinden line of products and their U.S. representatives. To try to cover all that is new with these guys, just in the Verlinden line, could probably fill this entire magazine. If you want the most current dope on all VLS has to offer, we recommend you purchase their voluminous color catalog. Purchase of this can include a subscription to the VLS product newsletter, which encompasses all of the products that VLS represents as well as all the up and coming Verlinden products. Contact: VLS, Lone



The VP Panzer II.

Star Industrial Park, 811 Lone Star Drive, O'Fallon, MO 63366, or call (314) 281-5700. In this space we'll just try to brush across some of our favorite items on display at the show.

Verlinden Productions has led the way in large 120mm scale figures. It pretty much figures that the introduction of large scale equipment like the Nebelwerfer and the Kubelwagen would eventually lead to... TANKS! On display were the 120mm Tiger I, Panzer IIC, M113, and M3A1 Stuart. Photos of

the upcoming Panther were also shown. All were very impressive as models and all are, in a word, large! It goes without saying that the level of super-detailing possible with these kits could be quite incredible.

The Tiger I on display is the E model with the steel wheels. The kit is hollow-molded to accommodate an interior. The M113 was molded all in flat sections and included a complete interior. Both the Panzer II and the Stuart were open inside, with the Panzer II even having separate engine hatches.

As you would guess, all this is not is not going to be cheap. The Tiger will retail for \$429.95 (for unmarried men only!). December availability. Replacement parts with zimmerit surfaces will be available for \$89.95. The base price for the Tiger includes a figure and a lavishly illustrated full color book on the vehicle (see below). The Panzer II retails for \$229.95 (available now). The retail prices and release dates for the Stuart and the Panther were not yet available, but VLS will announce all the details via their newsletter as soon as they become available.

All of these models were very striking, and that Tiger (not to mention that Panther) will no doubt be very difficult for German armor freaks to resist (us included). All the chosen subjects were interesting vehicles, but we were kind of partial to the Panzer IIC and the Stuart. There was something very appealing about their size. The kits were real gems and not much bigger in scale than say, the DML Maus. This would make them attractive to folks with limited space and also open the possibility of large scale dioramas and vignettes that could actually fit in your house!

Two new publications are on the horizon from Verlinden Productions. The aforementioned Tiger book is said to be the first in a series. The actual title will be *Tiger I Ausf E Armor in Detail No. 1*. This will come in handy for both the Tamiya kit and its 120mm big brother.

The other book is a painting guide for figures by Bob Letterman and Francois Verlinden. This full

color volume entitled *The System* will retail for \$19.95.

VLS hasn't abandoned the 35th scale scene. There are numerous items becoming available in 1994.



The new JSII from Dragon Models.

Xuron

Xuron Corporation (pronounced Zuron, rhymes with Iluron) manufactures a number of different cutting tools for the hobbyist. Some of you may recognize them from their Fine Scale Modeler ad. All of their tools were laid out in Chicago and we had a chance to demo them. Brass sheet, rod and wire were on hand to test the tools. We were impressed. All the tools are very well made and all but one tool (the Track Cutter, for model railroad track) would be welcome additions to any armor modeler's tool box. We especially liked their new Photo Etch Shear. This shear cleanly cut 10-mil photo-etched brass like it was paper. It worked very well in tight spaces too. The tool will retail for about seventeen dollars.

All of Xuron's shears are under twenty bucks, but they will be around your workbench for years to come we're sure. Best of all, every shear is made in U.S.A.

Check your local hobby shop for these products first, then write to Xuron Corp., 60 Industrial Park Rd., Saco, ME 04072.

Well, that should be enough stuff to tide you guys over. Don't forget... there's always next year! ☺



The new ISU-122 from Dragon.

Squeak!

Dragon Model's Maus Super Heavy Tank



The big, bad boy from above. The finished model is over 12 inches long!

THE GERMAN MAUS SUPER HEAVY Tank has held the interest of modelers for many years. I myself, as a wee lad, attempted to scratchbuild one. My attempt was less than stellar, I used tracks from a 1/25th scale Tiger II!

The vehicle had previously been ignored by plastic kit companies, although Airmodel, Schimdt and Accurate Armor all had their cottage industry versions. Then along comes Dragon Models, and bang...an injection-molded Maus! I guess it was bound to happen, as manufacturers compete for more and more popular subjects.

The DML Maus comes packaged in a large box with the now familiar full color box art by Ron Volstad. The Maus is shown (with considerable artistic license) in the streets of Berlin (?) surrounded by burning Russian JSIs and angry Volkstrum.

What's Inside

What you get when you open the box is eight, count 'em, eight large sprue trees. Six of those are duplicates for the suspension and tracks. Guess what you'll be working on for a while? The upper and lower hulls along with the turret are separate pieces.

The instruction sheet is an eight-page affair laid out in the typical DML fashion with large exploded-view drawings of each assembly sequence. There is also a diagram of all the parts, which always comes in handy when identifying the various bits.

The instructions state that the model is based on the surviving Maus located at the Kubinka Military Museum in Russia. This is certainly unique. It must have been quite a coup for DML to be able to gain access to such a rare and unusual AFV.

Assembly

Testors liquid glue was used on all of the larger assemblies, smaller parts were attached with Altec brand superglue.

Step one of the assembly begins with the sprocket, idler and bogie assemblies. Needless to say, this was the most time consuming part of building this kit. The Maus' running gear was extremely complex. The sprue attachment points on these parts (and all the parts for that matter) were finer than on previous DML kits that I've built. This made them much easier to remove. Part E26, that big 'ol sprocket, had a cross-sprue in its center which was a little difficult to remove with a knife without marring the part. I cut it out with a half-round file. Regrettably, you can't see it when the model is finished. There was also some heavy flash on the cross arms (D4), which I didn't bother



The finished bogie assembly. There ends up being 12 of the little suckers.

with as (say it with me) you can't see it on the finished tank. The finished bogie assemblies were neat and solid. I felt they looked accurate for the most part, although one of our MMiR staffers complained that the shape of the cross arms wasn't right. I couldn't see it. It's all a moot point really, because (one more time) they are just barely visible when the model is finished.

I didn't apply any adhesive to the center arms. This lets the bogie wheels swing free, like the real thing. This comes in handy later. Two C-shaped hooks mounted on either end of the finished assemblies are used to attach the bogies. One engages the inside hull area, and the other engages the inside of the side skirt. The fit against the inside hull was excellent, but the bogie assemblies didn't all

end up sitting horizontally. But more on that later.

The tracks are of the strip and link type. This is a "good-news, bad-news" type of deal. The bad news: if you don't like link-to-link, you don't like link-to-link. The good news: most of the tracks are presented in long, solid runs, and only those around the sprocket are L to L. Bad news: there are ejector pin marks all down the center of the tracks. Good news: the wheels cover all of them up. More good news: don't tell anyone, this is top secret (lean in close to the page); you can leave off the top track run. It's almost impossible to notice once the side skirts are installed. That is, if you can call something that weighs 25 tons a skirt.

Track Trials

Installation of the links around the idler and sprocket was a little tricky. Careful trimming was necessary to ensure a tight fit. You get two types of links. The larger, cleated links and the smaller interim links. The links are very similar to those seen on a Tiger II—only a lot bigger. Be careful when removing these smaller links from the sprue trees. They are more delicate than the larger ones. I damaged several before I got the hang of it.

I installed the tracks using slow curing liquid glue. Because of those ultra-wide tracks, the tank should sit nice and flat. So



The main drive sprocket. There was a large sprue across its center.

while the cement was drying, I put a thick paperback book into the hull to weight it down. You won't notice the effect of this until final assembly, but once the hull and skirts are installed the vehicle will sit flat. Leaving the bogies swinging helps a lot here.

I spent about three hours total, building, cleaning up, and installing the bogies and tracks. I would say that is about right for any kit of this complexity.

Because the running gear is covered up, it was necessary to paint this area before continuing. I chose a very dark gray for this, and using an airbrush, I applied several coats of Polly-S acrylic. I simply mixed black and white to obtain the gray. My finish color for the Maus is a late-war panzer gray, but I would recommend a dark color in this area



The completed lower hull. All of the bogie assemblies attach to both the hull and the side skirts. Note the attachment points on the hull. The hole in the hull at right is the opening for the driver's escape hatch. This photo also shows the lugs on the sprocket and idler wheel. These engage the side skirts.



The well detailed front hull area. The areas below the gratings were open, so the grills were blocked off from below with black construction paper.

regardless of your individual color scheme. The dark paint will enable you to go back and overspray some interesting highlights.

Bodacious Bogies

I deviated from the assembly sequence at this point and assembled the hull. The instructions recommend adding the main hull piece to the lower hull first, then adding the side skirts. This initially makes sense, because there are two lugs on the inside of each skirt that engage and level the drive sprocket and idler wheel. However, as I mentioned, the bogie assemblies were all slightly askew after being installed against the hull.

So a firm base is required to level them. After assembling the main hull, I let it dry overnight to make sure the pieces wouldn't separate. Then I carefully worked the main hull down onto the lower hull. It took a little careful bending to slip the lugs into the idler and sprocket, but it works. The fit, by the way, is great. There were no gaps on my example. I sealed all the joints with liquid cement.

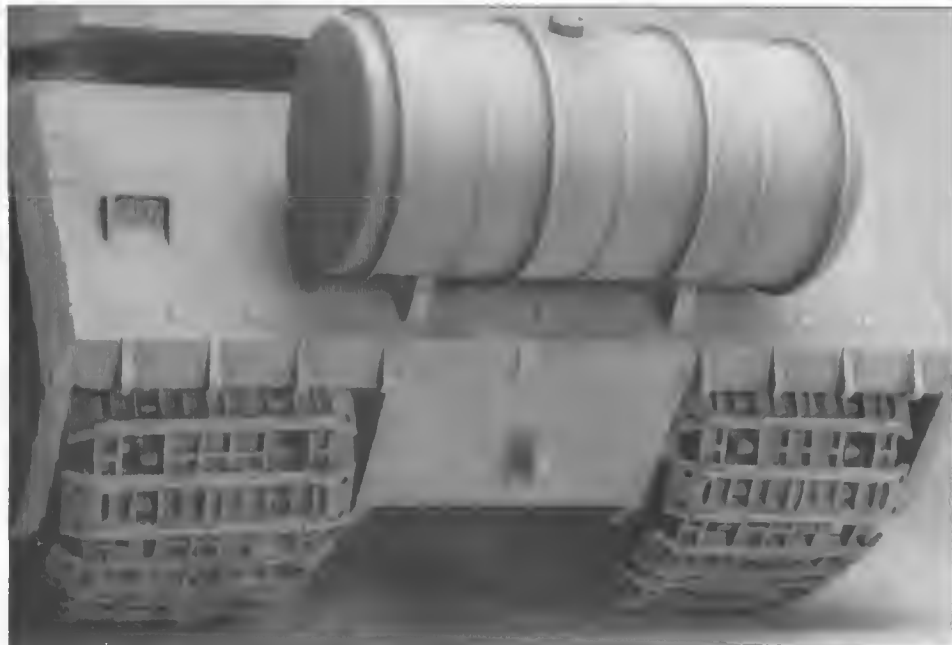
Now, once this was dry, I began gently pressing the skewed bogie assemblies into place against the inside of the skirts (there are small engagement points). I tacked each

one with superglue, then applied a little extra adhesive to the joint when it was dry. I know all this sounds a little confusing, but I found it to be a pretty easy fix for the misaligned bogies. The real fringe benefit is, once all this plastic is assembled, the thing is as sturdy as a brick. I even let my wife touch the model!

When the hull and bogie assemblies were complete, I began adding the details to the hull. Nothing much to write home about here. Everything installed without problems. The engine deck area is very well



The left rear corner of the hull, showing some of that keen weld detail.



The rear of the hull. That large rear fuel drum could use a little extra detailing. Note the absence of the large towing lugs adjacent to the inside of each track. Were they on the Kubinka vehicle?

detailed. The grills being especially well rendered. The driver's hatch can be left open or closed, although there is no interior. The engine grill areas (both front and back) are wide open underneath, so they should be blocked off. I used heavy black construction paper. Perhaps the engine and operating compartments will be released as a separate items from DML or Kirin. A wealth of reference is available (see MMiR Recce) on these areas for those of you who might want to take a crack at it on your own. No antennae mounts are included in the kit, but there are locating holes.

By the way, the hull is fully detailed, even on the bottom, where you'll find drain plates, mounting screws, and the driver/radio operator's escape hatch.

The fuel drum on the back of the hull is



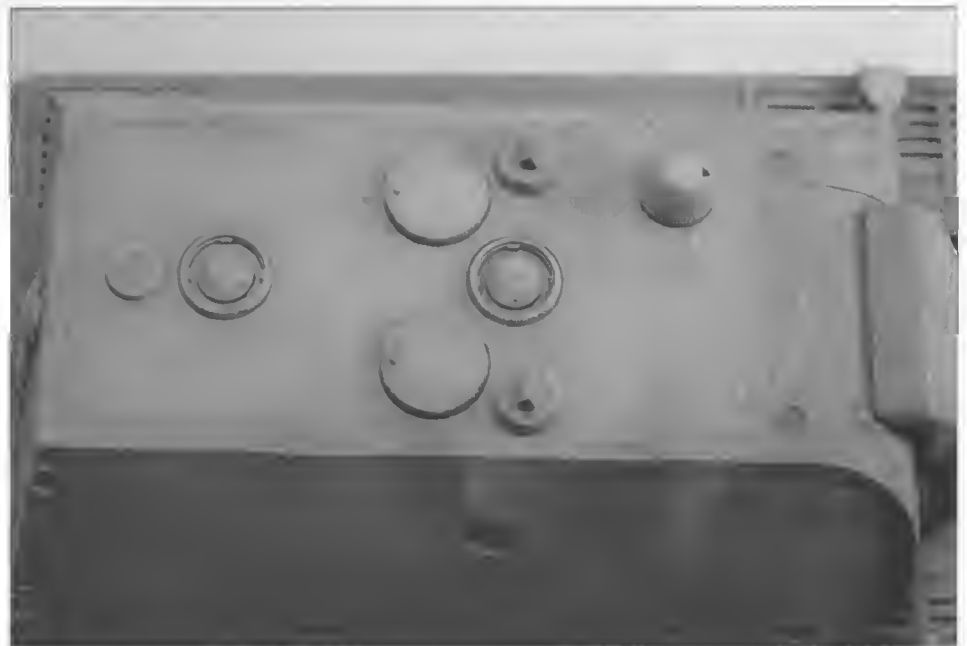
The finished hull bottom. The filter plates and mounting screws are a nice touch. If you look closely you can see the mounting points for the bogies on the skirts and on the hull.

a simple two-piece affair. I rotated mine in its mount slightly to make the seam less obvious. Super detailers might want to add brass straps and connectors, but I thought mine looked O.K. as is.

One minor gripe about the hull. All of the Maus' had two large towing lugs adjacent to each rear track on the bottom portion of the hull. Curiously, these were missing on the DML kit. Though they would be easy enough to add with thick card stock.



The highly detailed interlocking armor plates on the left rear of the turret.



The top of the turret. All of the various ventilators and hatches are in evidence, as is more of that nice weld and plate detail. The hatches are closed on this model, but they are molded separately.



The gun mounts. One of the few errors was a strange counterweight on the 75mm gun. Was this detail on the Kubinka vehicle? It doesn't appear in any of the German photos of the Maus. Hmmm...

Uptop

The turret construction is **real** simple. Just attach the two halves, add a few hatches, ventilators, the **gun and its mount** and away you go. I felt the best detailed part of the model was the turret. The Maus admittedly was a **very plain** vehicle. The engravers at DML have **spiced up** the boxy turret with some **stunning** engraved detail. The giant weld beads and cut armor plates are rendered with **great precision** and convey the look of this **leviathan** to a T.

One minor criticism on the turret was a **bizarre little counterweight** on the smaller 75mm gun. This was not present in any of the photos I have seen of the Maus. It **may** have been on the Kubinka vehicle for some unknown reason, but it **shouldn't** be on this one. I just filed it away, **no big whoop**. Parts

F10 and E8 don't fit quite right. The tray should fit under both guns and is attached by two strips mounted on the main gun. I guess that's two criticisms, but both are easy enough to fix.

I Paint The Thing

I opted for a scheme of overall Panzer Gray. I based this on a vehicle shown in a photo on page 61 of Walter J. Spielberger's *SpecialPanzerfahrzeuge*—try saying that ten times real fast. This tank may or may not be gray, but it seems logical since many vehicles were painted Panzer Gray again at the close of the war, and the picture does show a vehicle that is a solid color (see sidebar).

I sprayed a dark gray that I mixed from Polly-S and gradually lightened it with successive oversprays. I made the centers of the large plates lighter shades of gray and also lightened the bogies in this manner. Then I lightly sprayed a tan colored mixture along the bogies, lower skirts and hull to represent dust.

After letting the paint cure for about two days, I applied a heavily diluted wash of black and burnt sienna oil paint. I dilute the oils with Testors Model Master Airbrush Thinner. This type of thinner seems not to craze the acrylic paint. The tracks got washes of straight black and rust colors. Black oil stains were added to the fuel drum.

After the washes had dried overnight, I began dry brushing light gray and tan over the entire tank. I paid special attention to those weld joints on the turret and hull with the light gray—it really brings them out. I finished with a dusting of tan, gray and black pastels. The black being used to represent soot from the exhausts. I didn't apply any markings because as far as I know, none were ever used.

Conclusions

I had a pretty good time with my Maus. It wasn't as difficult to build as previous DML kits. It was fairly time consuming though, due primarily to the complex suspension. The kit was reasonably priced. I paid around forty dollars. This compares quite favorably to previously released versions of the Maus, which sold for up to two hundred dollars (ouch!).

The model appeared accurate other than the points I mentioned above. The vehicle scales out about right according to metric dimensions I have. Everything definitely "looked" right.

I'll build another Maus, as there are a few more possibilities for paint schemes, etc. I'd like to explore. In the Spielberger book the vehicle I've depicted has a large canvas

cover over the main armament. There is the V-1 prototype vehicle with the large cement turret and aircraft mounting ladder. The Spielberger book also shows a Maus on display for Whermacht VIPs in late-war three color camo. The kit is cheap enough to be

cannibalized for use in Maus factory dioramas. If you like to scratchbuild, the turret is the same as that proposed for the E100 super heavy. The possibilities go on! ☺

—Pat Stansell



MMiR RECCE

German Maus Heavy Tank. Kit number 6007. Purchased from Squadron mail order: 1115 Crowley Drive, Carrollton, Texas 75011. Price was \$39.98, no sales tax, \$3.75 shipping charge. Payment by credit card (via fax: 214-242-3775), delivery time was approximately two weeks.

References

SpecialPanzerfahrzeuge Des Deutschen Heeres by Walter J. Spielberger. This German language book contains most of the known photos of the Maus, as well as technical drawings and photos of the factory models. I've had mine for years, but one source for the Spielberger books is Elite Military Book Distributor, P.O. Box 6145, Americus, Georgia 31709. (912) 928-3040.

Sonderpanzer, German Special Purpose Vehicles by Walter J. Spielberger. Published under the Aero label in 1968, this book contains some of the same photos as above. It also has good photos of the E-100 and other German oddities. It has been out of print for some time now. Look for it at swap meets or steal it from someone in your local hobby club.

The Maus Lives!, Wheels & Tracks Magazine, Issue number 23 (1988). This British magazine writes extensively on all manner of WWII soft skins and AFVs. They are a bit hard to find. Check W&T's U.S. distributor: Bill Dean Books, Ltd., 151-49 7th Avenue, Whitestone, NY 11357. Back issues are available singly or in bound volumes.

How Many Mice?

Perhaps no other modern military vehicle is shrouded in as much mystery as the German Maus. Until very recently, little or nothing was known about this strange tank. Borne out of Germany's "tit-for-tat" armor race with the Soviets, the Maus was Hitler's final answer to Soviet heavy tank designs.

The Maus was the brainchild of Dr. Ferdinand Porsche, designer of the famous Volkswagen, and the father of the modern automotive company. Spurned on by Hitler's relentless quest for so-called miracle weapons, Dr. Porsche came up with what was probably the most wasteful and outlandish tank design of World War Two. Weighing in at somewhere around 200 tons and powered by 2400 horse power engine, the Maus' potential success on the battlefield was dubious. Naming this leviathan after such a diminutive creature was apparently Dr. Porsche's idea of a joke.

Modelers have had little to go on when researching this vehicle. Just after the war, Western analysts were not even sure if a complete vehicle existed. Buildings at Essen contained hulls, turrets, and other components. Allied intelligence determined that at least two vehicles were in running order, but could not confirm their location.

In the post-war years photos and drawings of the Maus gradually appeared in various armor books. Most notable is *Special-Panzerfahrzeuge Des Deutschen Heeres* by Walter J. Spielberger (1987). Although not specifically about the Maus, the book contains all of the known photos of the vehicle. An earlier work by Mr. Spielberger, *Sonderpanzer, German Special Purpose Vehicles* published under the Aero label in 1968, contains some of the same photos. What you will find if you peruse these books is that there were apparently two of these vehicles completed at wars end. One, a test vehicle sometimes referred to as V1, mounted only a dummy turret. The other was finished, seen complete with armament, lights and radio antenna. This beast is often referred to as V-2. V is for "Versuchsfahrzeug," German for test vehicle.

The general impression was that both vehicles were destroyed as the Germans retreated back to Berlin. However, Steve Zaloga in his book *Eastern Front* (Squadron Signal Publications), states that the two vehicles went into combat against the Soviets at the eleventh hour of the war. Mr. Zaloga's reputation being what it is regarding matters of the Soviet Army, this scenario has always been widely accepted by modelers.

Enter *Wheels & Tracks* Magazine. This British magazine writes extensively on all manner of soft skins and AFVs. Issue number 23 contains an article titled "*Maus Lives!*" Written by renowned British armor



Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv

historian David Fletcher, this fascinating article explores all facets of the vehicle's development and includes many unique drawings and photos. Being the librarian of the Bovington Tank Museum certainly gives Mr. Fletcher all the access one would need to write on this murky subject. The rumor regarding the existence of a surviving Maus was first confirmed in this article. This confirmation was also due in part to research conducted by the editors of W&T, who corresponded with the curator of the "Central Museum of the Armed Forces," one V. Pasechnikov. Mr. Pasechnikov confirmed that an example was indeed peacefully decomposing in the Kubinka Museum outside Moscow. He stated that "two had been engaged against the Red Army" and that they were considered "trophies of the battle of Berlin." A photo was provided by Mr. Pasechnikov and was printed following the Fletcher article. The photo shows what appears to be the test vehicle V1, fitted with a completed turret.

It is Mr. Fletcher's theory is that this vehicle is a composite of the scuttled Maus V-2, and the test vehicle, V-1. He bases this on a photo he recovered from a Soviet book published in the 1960's titled TAKH. This grainy

photo shows a destroyed Maus with its hull disintegrated and its turret laying atop the whole mess. He speculates that this turret was most likely placed on the turretless V-1 and then returned to the Soviet Union.

The Japanese publication *Tank Magazine* has recently published photos of the Kubinka Maus, now resplendent in Soviet gloss green and white (!). It is this vehicle that the DML kit is based on.

Now we would like to throw in our two cents to all this historical mess. We suggest that there were possibly three finished Maus tanks. The V-1 and V-2 that we already know about, and a third completed just prior to war's end. Our somewhat thin hypothesis is based on photos seen in the Spielberg *Panzerfahrzeuge* book. On page 62, there is a photo of what first appears to be the V-2 vehicle as seen from the left side. Unfortunately, all of the established photos of V-2 are of the right side. But what intrigues us is that the tank pictured on page 62 has solid road wheels, rather than the pierced ones seen in other photos. Each of the 12 bogie assemblies weighed 1.5 tons, so changing them may have taken consid-

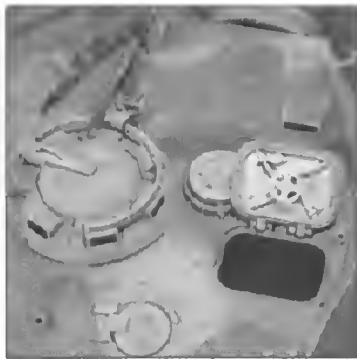
erable time. This seems unlikely given the proximity of Soviet troops late in the war. The camouflage pattern of this vehicle is similar to other photos, but not exact. One could attribute the solid road wheels to mud clogging the holes or grainy wartime photography. But hey, it's awful fun to speculate about such things. There are also some tantalizing photos in the Spielberg book of a dark gray or green vehicle sporting a large canvas cover on the main armament. This could be the V-2 prior to the application of its camouflage paint job, but then again... who knows? The image of two or three Maus tanks, 12.8 cm guns blazing, slugging it out in the final battles is hard to resist.

The photo reprinted in the Fletcher article and attributed the Soviet book TAKH, does appear show a Maus destroyed by an internal explosion. But what effect would a Soviet 203mm howitzer have even on the Maus at point blank range? Or what about a platoon of JSIs ganging up with all their firepower? Either of these might result in similar levels of damage.

If anyone has additional information or opinions on this subject, do drop us a line. Let the speculation continue.

Totally New Tiger

Tamiya gets your attention again with an all new scale replica



At left: detail shots of the beast. From the top; the inside front of the hull showing the detail around the final drive—surprisingly one of the more detailed areas of the model. Next, the rear turret access hatch, which is full detailed inside. Below that, the Bosch black-out light and the “Kugelblinde” mount for the hull machine gun. Next, the the fully detailed commander's and loader's hatches. In the bottom shot is the very nicely detailed commander's AA machine gun and its mount.

YOU'VE ALL READ ABOUT THE GERMAN KING TIGER. Best tank design of World War Two, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. You don't really want to read about the real thing do you? You want to read about the Tamiya Tiger II. The best designed *model* tank of World War II. Don't write this kit off as just a polishing up of the old Tiger, oh no, this baby is an all new scale replica, like their previous Tiger I.

The kit is composed of five sprues, two hull halves, a sheet of two-sided tape (more on this later), fine mesh and a decal sheet. A nut and bolt (for the gun breech) and a sprue of poly caps are also included. The tracks are of the soft plastic type (more on this later too).

Build It, And They Will Come

As you begin construction you'll notice that the bottom hull is fully detailed. The forward area of the hull is accurate even without the final drives installed, WOW! The indentations for the final drive are completely accurate—even the hole for the drive gear which engages the final drive. There would be just few seams to fill if you wanted to show your cat under repair. The final drive housings are also highly detailed. All this detail shouldn't go to waste. I'm sure we'll see this kit popping up in various repair and factory dioramas.

The lower hull could easily accommodate an interior. I bet it won't be long before we see that from some aftermarket manufacturer.

The road wheels and suspension are the nicest on an armor model I have ever seen. The three piece rear idler is the first accurate one on a King Tiger Model that I know of. The torsion bars go in opposite directions on either side of the hull as they should.

Several different types of roadwheels make up the suspension. Make sure to distinguish all the types as you move through the construction process. All of the roadwheels use the typical poly cap inner part. This is also true of the sprocket and idler wheel. However, each roadwheel is capped with a hub that must glued on to each shaft. If you're careful, all the roadwheels will still turn freely. This means you'll still be able to play with your model on the carpet. No, really, having all those components turn helps in painting them. It also helps when installing the tracks. I used just a drop of superglue placed inside each hub and that seemed to do the trick.

Be careful when installing the idler wheel. It needs to go on at the same time as the last roadwheel.



The final drive fitting at the front of the hull. It's accurate even without the housing installed.

Otherwise it won't clear the wheel.

Is there any bad news amidst all this flowerly praise? Well, yes and no. Yes, if you think that a kit in this price range should include link-to-link tracks. No if you don't. It was a bit of a let down to open the box and not see separate track links. I personally got a little spoiled with their Tiger I kit. Tamiya tempts you with a single sprue of track links for the spares on the turret. What you do get is a set of vinyl tracks, and to Tamiya's credit, they are well detailed and accurate. The instructions state that they can be glued together with regular plastic cement, but I used high viscosity superglue instead. I turned them inside out to help keep even tension on the joint while the cement cured.

The biggest disappointment was that when the tracks were installed, they had almost no slack, and the fit was extremely tight—I broke off an idler wheel while installing them. I stuffed small wads of paper towel between the hull and the tracks until they had the right fit. I then added a few small drops of superglue with a fine applicator tip to key points on the tops of the roadwheels. When the glue was dry, I pulled out the paper towel and the tracks stayed put. They don't look bad when finally finished. If you're going to add the side skirts you can't see much of the top track run anyway. By the way, all this took place after the I painted the lower hull.

I joined the hull halves prior to adding any of the smaller parts to the hull. The fit of the two halves is not quite perfect. It took some wrangling to get both pieces to fit together properly. The rear area was the toughest on my example.

Many of the parts which one would normally discard in favor of super-detailing, are well detailed and worth keeping as is. There are many small, wonderfully detailed subassemblies, like the engine hatch and the Bosch blackout light.

Watch out for the jack and its mount. Because it sits at the bottom of the rear hull, I kept grabbing the model in this area and it could easily break off. I left off all of the tools and tow cables until after painting. Although this is pretty much an out-of-the-

box review, I couldn't resist adding a wire to the Bosch driving light. I used fine solder.

The periscopes in the driver's and radio operator's positions are some of the other small pieces that I liked. These are the same ones found in the Tiger I kit. These would make interesting aftermarket items. The round cupolas in the Tiger I, Tiger II and the Panther all contained seven of these little guys.

One example of the fact that Tamiya did its homework: the side skirt brackets are molded on the hull, should you desire to leave the skirts off. The mounting points are cleverly designed to fit into recesses in the backsides of the skirts.

Parts D12 and D13 get covered by fine screen mesh, using an odd, but effective, double-sided tape method. I left these items off my model, as they were seen mounted only on the earlier Porsche versions of the Tiger II. I couldn't find any photos showing them on the Henschel version. The most commonly found types of anti-grenade screening found on the Henschels were the rigid wire mesh type, or the steel plate type. The Porsche turret version is due out any minute from Tamiya, so if you are building this version here's how I did it:

Cut the tape into small strips using a straight edge and a sharp knife—the tape is kind of tough. Remove the *yellow* side first, then work the tape around the edges of the screen. Then remove the white portion of the tape and attach the screen.

A template is provided for cutting the mesh, and it fits perfectly. Place the mesh directly over the template to cut it. I wasn't crazy about the tape at first. It didn't seem to stick very well. But once it set up for a while, the bond seemed to harden. It's weird, but it works. If you leave these off your model as I did, make sure to trim away their locating pins on the hull.

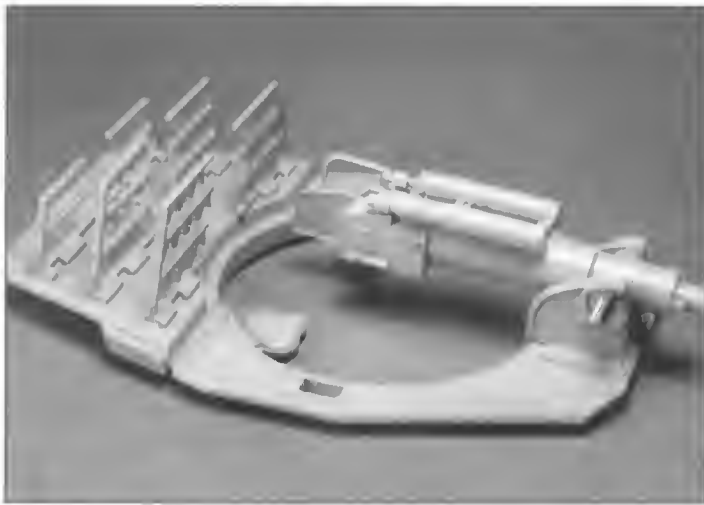
Turret

The turret contains a basic interior. You get the gun and breech shapes, as well as the ammo racks and seats. The main gun assembles into its trunnions with an inch-long nut and a bolt (did you say nut and bolt?). This is a curious little arrangement. You have to wonder why they would go to all the trouble of adding an interior and then stick a big 'ol screw and nut through the gun. The saving grace is that it isn't visible from any angle once the turret is assembled. Make sure to paint the turret interior before buttoning it up.

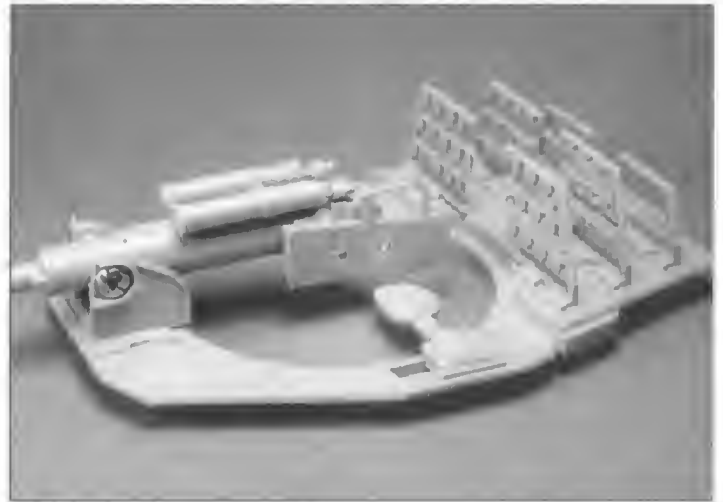
I added the outside gun mount and barrel at this point. The barrel took a small



The various suspension components. Clockwise from left: the final drive housing; the drive sprocket; the idler wheel; one of two types of roadwheel; and a roadwheel hub.



The turret interior. Note the ammo racks and that mysterious nut and bolt for the main gun.



amount of putty in order to hide the seam which runs down its length.

The turret halves went together with no problems. A little monkeying is necessary to get all the plates aligned properly. There were some small gaps at the front corners, adjacent to the gun mount.

The loader's hatch is a little model all in itself with its handles and latching wheel. Tip: mount the grab handles (C3) *then* carefully remove any flash, they are just a little too small to handle for long. Do this on the outside handle and other small grab handles on the tank.

You get a choice of two turret ventilators, D-7 or D15. One is actually a foul weather cover for the vent, hence the handle. Most of my reference photos show no cover installed.

The spare track hooks, parts B1, are cleverly designed to fit into the turret in such a way as to appear flush with its surface. Test fit these little buggers though, I goofed on mine—they are easier to install right the first time! Once the hooks are dry, you can hang the tracks. I didn't use any glue on mine.

The turret MG is a real gem. I installed the mount on the turret ring and let it dry before adding the gun and its frame. The mount is delicate enough to be weighed down by the gun if the cement isn't completely cured.

Painting and Finishing

I painted the model an overall dark yellow. I used Polly-S acrylics. For the yellow I used *Mud* # 410083 with a few drops of white mixed in. I thin with the Polly-S airbrush thinner. I painted the model, paying special attention to the areas around the suspension and road wheels. I left off the side skirts

and tools along with the other bits I mentioned before, during the painting process.

After the model had set up for about 30 minutes, I added the tracks as described above and attached the side skirts. Prior to installation, the tracks were misted with a light tan to dull them down a little. This was also done to the spare links. I also took this opportunity to check for any blemishes or glue stains I might have missed. I then went back over certain areas with the dark yellow to touch up. I let this dry overnight.

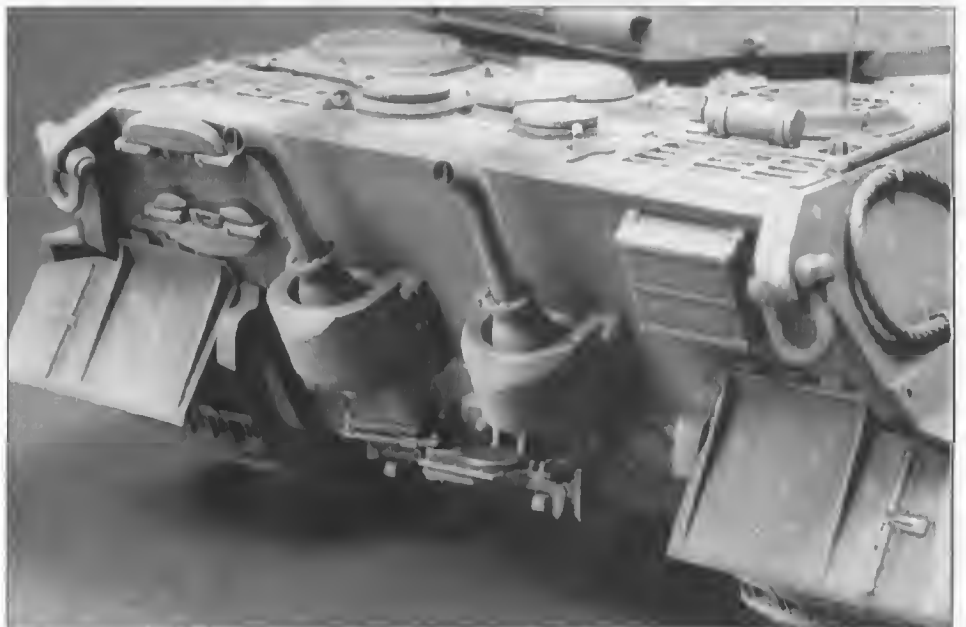
I wanted to depict a tank from SS Panzer-Abteilung 501 during the Ardennes offensive. Many of these vehicles were finished in a "hard-line" version of the German three-tone camouflage. This scheme became more common as the war drew to a close.

Normally, you would just spray on the

pattern, but in this instance you must brush-paint the scheme instead. I'm not a big fan of this, as it takes quite a bit longer than spraying. If you attempt this method, I'd recommend you apply the paint in thin coats to avoid showing build-ups or brush strokes. I used the Polly-S acrylics again for this. I used the colors: *Coach Green* and *Roof Brown*. It took about five coats to get a nice, even coverage.

I then added the distinctive speckling of the late-war ambush scheme, using all of the three tones in a random pattern. After this dried, the tools, tow cables, etc. were all painted and added to the vehicle.

I didn't use the kit's decals, but markings are provided for some of the more famous (or is it infamous?) Tiger IIs. Markings are provided for the much photographed 222 and



The back end of the Tiger II. Watch out for the jack bracket at the bottom—it's a little delicate. The covers for the exhausts had a nice texture on their surface.

332 Tigers of the Ardennes fighting. I wanted something a little different, so I added new turret numbers using some yellow outline dry transfers I had laying around. I hand painted the centers blue.

I then went back and oversprayed the entire model with a light mud color to represent general dirt, dust and road grime. The vehicles of 501 had a fairly substantial road march prior the start of the Ardennes offensive, so I'm guessing they were all pretty filthy, even before the battle began.

After all the paint had a chance to cure for about 2 days, I added very thin washes of dark brown oil paint. I also applied a little thinned black to the engine deck to represent oil stains. After this was thoroughly dry, I drybrushed the model overall with a light tan. Final weathering was done by applying ground-up pastels here and there.

Conclusions

If it's not obvious already, I liked this model a lot. It is very well detailed and it is extremely accurate to dimensions I have of surviving vehicles. The kit isn't perfect, however (hey, what kit is?). There were a few missing nuts and bolts, most notably the small brackets on the tops of the front fenders. If only all armor kits had such minor defects!

You will not encounter any major problems when building this kit. There are opportunities for superdetailing, so you can use the extra time for some of that Show Model brass or other add-ons. Adding to the turret interior or expanding the interior completely are also possibilities.

Some folks might object to the price (list is \$47.00) and the fact that the kit does not include link-to-link tracks, like its cousin the Tiger IE. The scuttle-butt is that Tamiya did include the tracks in order to keep the price down. Other than the fit, the tracks in the kit were not all that bad. The one sprue of individual links in the kit is now available in a package of six for about twenty-eight dollars, if you want to go that route. Model Kasten also offers its version for around thirty-five dollars.

In addition to the tracks, an etched detail set of the engine deck screens, and a set of turned brass rounds will also be available. [see *Chicago Show story* this issue—Ed]

If you look around you'll find the kit at a discount, I got mine that way. All-in-all, if you're a German armor fan, you'll want to add this model to your collection.

—Ken Dugan

NATIONAL ARCHIVES



It's not our intention to bore y'all with factoids about the Tiger that are common knowledge. But... The Tamiya kit can represent two very famous Tiger IIs: 222 and 332. Filmed extensively during the opening phases of the Ardennes Offense, 222 was of the SS Panzer-Abteilung 501, the heavy tank regiment

of Kampfgruppe Peiper. 222 fought and died in the town of Savelot, Belgium. Tiger 332 was of Heersgruppe B and was abandoned near Coe, Belgium. It was later recovered by U.S. engineers of the 463rd Ordnance Evacuation Company. It was then shipped by rail and sea to Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland where it was unceremoniously cut open for viewing (hey, we won the war, right?). Following its evaluation, it was buttoned up with steel plate and put on outdoor display, where over the years it sported some very funky paint schemes.

Sometime last year it was relinquished to the Patton Museum at Fort Knox, Kentucky where it underwent a complete renovation in their workshops. During the restoration process, spent MG casings were found under the hull floor.

It is now on view inside the museum as a static display, having been reopened as a cut-a-way vehicle.

MMiR RECCE

German King Tiger Tank. Kit number 164. Purchased from Discount Hobby Center: P.O. Box 370, Utica, NY 13503. Price was \$31.95, no sales tax, \$4.25 shipping charge. Payment by credit card (VISA) via fax: 315-733-1723. Shipping time was approximately two weeks.

References

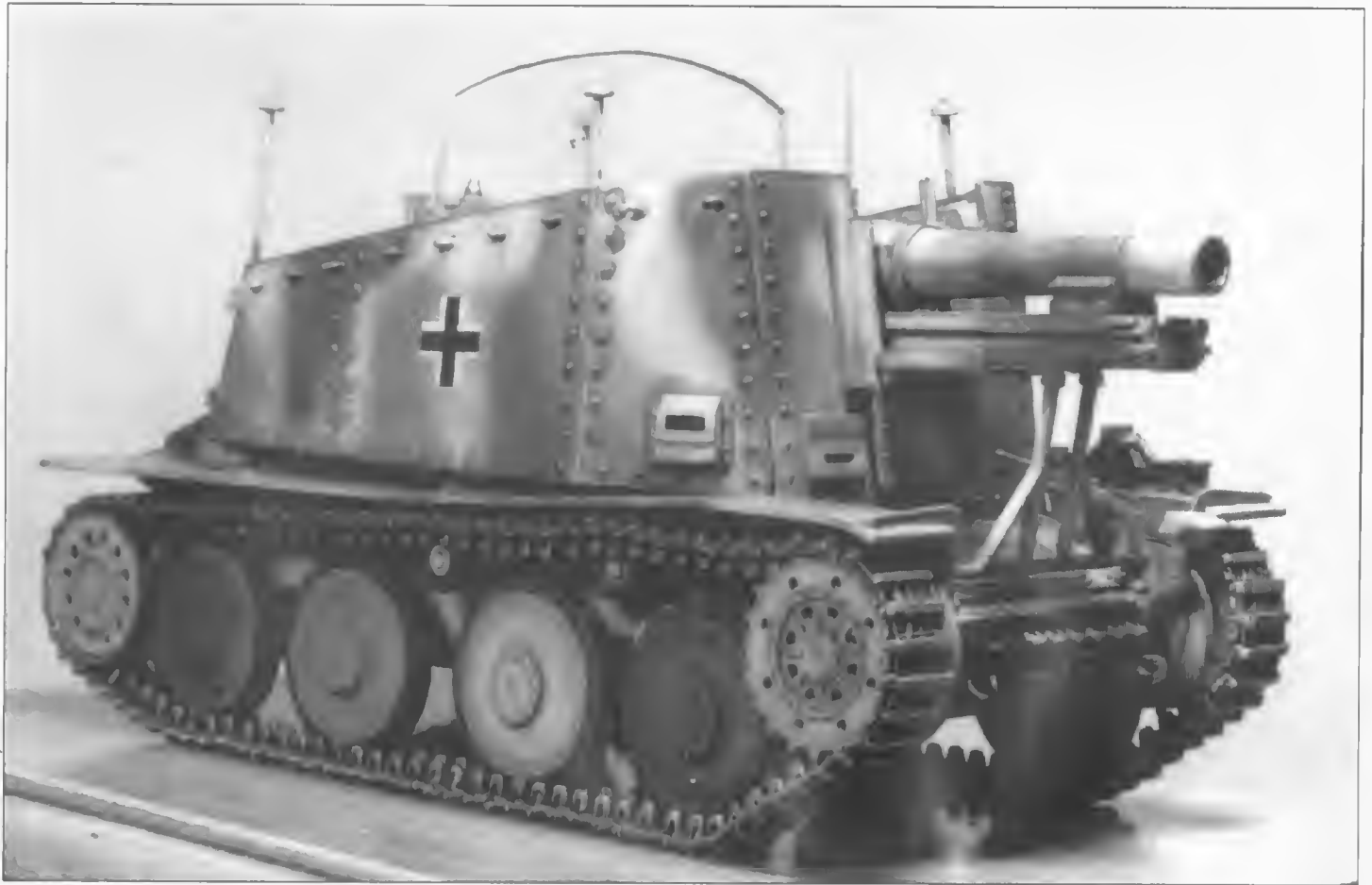
Panzers at Samur, No. 1, Art Box. Ltd. No doubt the best single reference on the Tiger II. Hundreds of photos of both the interior and exterior of the tank. Detail drawings and plans. Japanese text with English captions. Available through the MMiR Book Services but also found in hobby shops and mail order outlets. Around thirty dollars, depending on where you buy it.

The King Tiger, Volumes I & II, Schiffer Publishing. If you're on a budget you can't beat these volumes. Soft cover in the 11 x 8 1/2 format, these books contain many photos and drawings of the Tiger II. Each are about eight bucks. Check your local hobby shop or write directly to the publisher: Schiffer Publishing, Ltd., 77 Lower Valley Road, Atglen, PA 19310

Battle of the Bulge, Then and Now, Jean Paul Pallud, After the Battle magazine. An incredibly comprehensive look the Ardennes offensive. Traces the routes of many the "501" Tiger IIs. Over 500 pages of photos. It's expensive, about a hundred dollars. Look for it through Military Booksellers.

Cookin' on the Grille

A close-up look at this new kit from Kirin



THE GRILLE WAS BASED ON THE chassis of the Czech 38(t) tank. As the war progressed, the 38(t) became unsuitable for battlefield use. Production of the tank was redirected to the manufacture of various SPG's in 1942. The Grille is often incorrectly referred to as the "Bison." The correct designation is: sIG 33 Auf Gw. 38(t) Ausf H Grille. The Ausf K was also known as the Grille. It differed from the Ausf H by having the gun mounted towards the rear, rather than forward.

The Kirin Grille comes packaged in the black box that is now common for them. What you get when you open the box is uncommon for Kirin. The kit is done almost entirely in injection molded plastic. There are nine sprue trees and a small sheet of photo-etched parts. Two of the trees are

from the Italeri 38(t) kit, although they are molded in a gray colored plastic like the rest of the kit. The two trees are the suspension and lower hull. The balance are of the upper hull, gun, and transmission. Four trees make up the new roadwheels and tracks.

A large eight-page instruction sheet is also enclosed. This sheet is very similar to those found in DML kits. It's a little strange that this kit is billed as a Kirin kit and not a DML kit. At any rate, the instructions are very comprehensive, with exploded view drawings of each assembly sequence. There are also four photos of the finished model.

This kit was built straight from the box using liquid cement and superglue.

Construction

I followed the suggested assembly sequence more or less. I began with the

suspension area. If you have built the Italeri kit before this will present no surprises. The new roadwheels provided are of the correct type with the proper number of bolts around the outside rim.

The tracks were assembled but not attached to the model at this point. I like to leave each track run in two sub-assemblies until after painting. I build the links around the suspension getting the "sit" I want. I use liquid cement and I'm careful not to get any glue on the wheels, etc. I apply adhesive to all but two links, one on the top, and one on the bottom. This allows them to be lifted off when they have dried. After painting, the tracks can just be dropped back into place.

The tracks went together well. A little trimming was necessary at the joints to ensure a tight fit. The tolerances at the joints are so tight that any and all flash must be



The link-to-link tracks in their finished runs. It would be nice to see these available for other 38(t) kits.

cleaned up before the links will fit together. There were some injector pin marks on the tracks, but they weren't really noticeable when the tracks were completed and installed.

The next step is the interior. The floor, transmission, and driver's seat drop in first. The transmission is just a basic shape. If you have the reference, this piece could benefit from the extra detail. The floor of the fighting compartment is not textured, although the instructions show a finished model with diamond tread plate in this area. There are several manufacturers of this type of replacement plate for modelers who wish to correct it. The front seats have some injector pin marks (there's lots inside the shields too, I filled them all with Dr. Micro Tools putty). The rear firewall is the same as in the Italeri kit. This means that the engine access door does not clear the floor, but this may have been the case on the actual vehicle.

I suggest lots of test fitting of the side hull panels before gluing. Some play is necessary to get all the panels aligned flush. The instructions indicate installing the small rear panel A24, after the larger panel, but you should test and install them all at once. The two rear side panels, A3 and A9 were access doors, so you can leave these open if you wish.

The Grille was crammed with all kinds of equipment and the kit represents most, if not all of it quite well. The large ammo storage bin in the rear opens to show the ammo storage.

Gear stowage boxes, fuse storage boxes, and ready round racks are present. The nicest item inside was the radio set which is the FuG 16. An etched frame is provided which folds up to surround the transmitter and the receiver. A rain cover for the set is also provided (MA9). It would be nice to see this radio set available separately.

Leave off the radio, ready round boxes, seats and fuse storage boxes until after the side panels are installed and dry. They'll just be in the way otherwise.

There is an etched actuating arm for gun travel lock which installs into the front upper hull panel. Install this before front panel, A4. The completed arm assembly was very convincing.

Etched details of the inside visor plate and its swing arms are included. The swing arms allow the visor to be shown open. No vision block is provided for the visor, so one should be added using scrap plastic.

Many of the interior details had no locating pins or marks. This is true of the seats, the ready-round racks, and the fuse storage boxes. I used the box top and instruction photos as a reference and it was no big deal.

The SIG 33 Gun

The gun itself is very basic. The mount may not be accurate, it doesn't look like it would actually work, but I could not verify its accuracy. The mount installs by fitting its curved post onto a square fitting in the floor. Reference in this area is somewhat vague. Kirin may have been hamstrung by the same lack of reference in this area that I was. The gun laying equipment was also basic, but not badly done. All the major assemblies are represented.

The barrel and gun slide appeared to be accurate and well-formed. The gun is assembled in two halves. The barrel end (D11) is a separate piece. This keeps the barrel end round, but careful fitting is required to get it all to go together correctly. The breech block was well detailed and assembled with no problems.

There is some curious photo-etched



The SIG 33 gun installed in its mount. The mounting arm is seen at the lower left. This engages a hub in the lower hull.



The finished SIG 33. The gun is basic, but accurate. This might also be an interesting item to release separately. In addition to its use as a fieldpiece, it was also found in several other SPG's.



The gun mount as seen from the right side.

details for the front gun slide mount, parts MA8 and MA4. It seems these details could have just as easily been molded on. I left the gun off the model until after painting. This allows access to the driving compartment.

Two different types of rounds are provided. Two of them have their charges molded separately, which is a nice touch. Another nice touch is the etched shield which sits just below the gun. On the real vehicle, this shield was on a spring hinge that allowed the shield to be raised and lowered with the main gun. This prevented shrapnel or small arms fire from entering the fighting compartment when the gun was elevated.

Painting & Weathering

I painted my model with Floquil RR colors. I like Floquil over other types of paint because the lacquer-based paints tend to bite into the model's surface very slightly. This helps the model tolerate handling and weathering a little better.

Using an airbrush, I sprayed the model



The gun mount seen from the left.

overall dark yellow (Floquil SP Armor Yellow). I was careful to get uniform coverage inside the vehicle as well as outside. As I mentioned, I left off certain details such as the gun, driver's seats, and tracks.

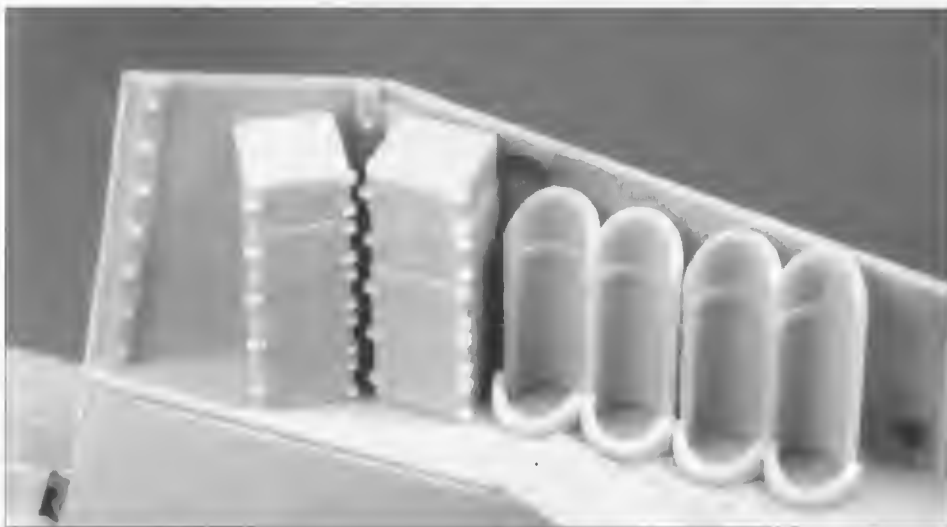
I then sprayed a random pattern of green (Floquil Coach Green) and brown (Floquil Roof Brown) over the outside of the tank.

I used slightly different tones in my 3-color scheme, as in my opinion, the variety of colors found in the field and from the factory was vast. I think you have a large range due to the thinning agents used, amount of thinner, method of application, etc.

I used facial tissue gently tucked into the fighting compartment to mask it off. I also used index cards to help shield the interior as I sprayed. The gun was left dark yellow, except where it protruded from the fighting compartment. This area was given the same three color camouflage as the rest of the vehicle. The gun breech was primed in black, then painted gunmetal. I then rubbed graphite (pencil lead) over the surface to make it look like worn metal. I use this method on all bare metal surfaces, and those which I think might receive excess wear. It gives a realistic metallic sheen.

The seats and radios were then painted and installed. I weathered the fighting compartment with washes of thinned black artist's gaulche (check art stores, W&N is a good brand) and more of the graphite in select areas. The gun was then installed. I painted some of the rounds and added the various markings. The final additions to the fighting compartment were the foul-weather support rods.

The tracks were painted gunmetal, then given washes of rust colored Pelican Plaka water colors. When dry, they were installed on the vehicle and dry-brushed with Humbrol Steel.



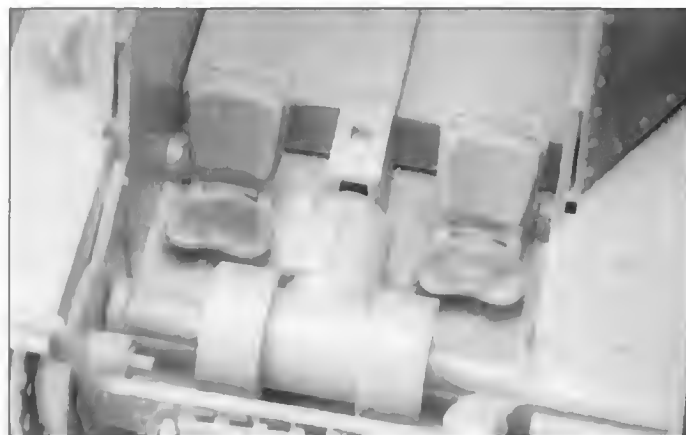
The upper right hand side of the superstructure. The boxes at the left of the ready-round racks were probably used to carry the arming fuses for the various rounds.



The upper left hand side of the superstructure. Notice that spiffy little radio set and its cover. The rectangle in front of the radio is the gunner's seat. The commander's seat is just behind the radio.



The fighting compartment prior to the installation of the main gun. The area between the seats is where the gun is mounted.



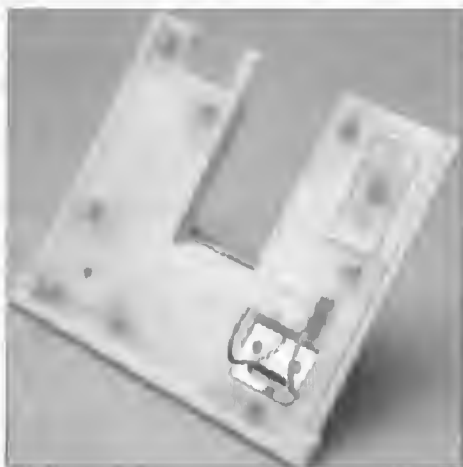
The driving compartment. The transmission area is just a basic shape, but a few bits and pieces would probably dress it up nicely. The seats needed a little filling. One of these seats may not have been used in the real vehicle. Does anybody know?

I used the kit's decals, and applied a balkenkruz to each side of the superstructure. The decals weren't the best I'd ever seen. You may want to replace them with an aftermarket product.

I accomplished final weathering with more of the thinned black gauche to accentuate the rivet detail on the superstructure and some limited dry-brushing around the roadwheels and the rear engine deck.



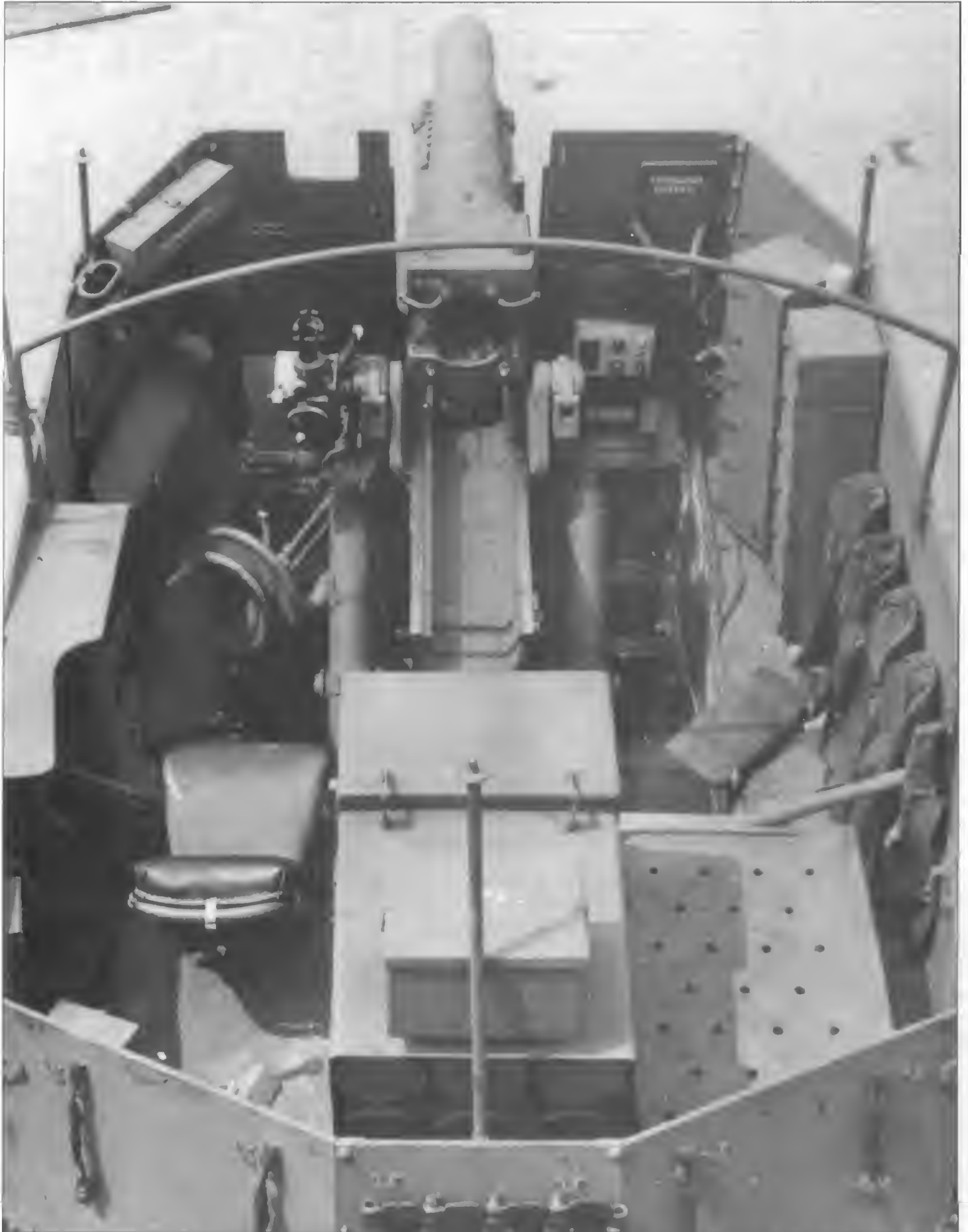
The front shield. The shiny part is the etched fold down shield.



The back side of the shield. The objects at below right are the driver's visor and the intercom.



The finished model as seen from above. It ends up looking pretty good. Compare with the photo at right. There are a few things the super-detailer might want to add.



The fighting compartment of the Grille as seen from above. Of special interest are the canvas covers for the ready-round racks, the interior stenciling and the cabling running down the right hand side of the sponson, near the fuse boxes.




The Grille in a factory roll-out photo. The supplementary shields can be seen quite clearly, just below the elevated main gun. The blotchy areas on the side shields are probably touch-ups to the factory's dark red primer. This vehicle would most likely be returned to the shop for its coat of dark yellow.

Conclusions

The kit went together very well for the most part. To be a little nit-picky, I thought the driving compartment could have contained a little extra detail. This area is very visible when the model is finished.

The introduction of this kit certainly fills a niche in the long line of German armor models. The kit has many unique and well detailed features. Hopefully other, similar vehicles will follow from Kirin. As I stated at the top, The Ausf K was very similar, and there was also an anti-aircraft vehicle based on this chassis, not to mention the 75mm Marder III and the 7.62 cm Marder III (the one with the captured Russian weapon). The sIG 150 could also be modeled as the fieldpiece with the mount for the Panzer I. As if that wasn't enough, the sIG was also found on an elongated Panzer II chassis.

The list price of the kit is \$38.00 (also see below). This compares well to other new armor releases. I recommend this kit to anyone interested in German armor. 

—Scot Bradley

MMiR RECCE

Kirin Sd. Kfz. 138/1 Ausf H "Grille." Kit number 28003. Purchased from VLS mail order, Lone Star Industrial Park, 811 Lone Star Drive, O'Fallon, MO 63366, (314) 281-5700. I backordered my Grille about 2 months prior to its release. Once in, it was shipped in about a week. I belong to their "Masters Group," so I get free shipping and 25% off all purchases. My final price on the Grille was \$28.50. Payment was by check and there was no local tax.

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Sturmartillerie, (Armor Series Number 4) Walter J. Spielberger and Uwe Fiest. Arco Publishing, 1967. The old Aero armor series is out of print, but the books are still about.

Panzerkampfwagen 38(t) and 35(t) AFV Profiles #22, Profiles Publications, Ltd. 1970.

Encyclopedia of German Tanks, by Peter Chamberlain and Hillary L. Doyle. Arco Publishing Company, 1978. Page 47. This volume is must for German armor modelers, available at most specialist booksellers.

PzKpfw. 38(t) in Action, Armor #19, Charles K. Klimment and Hillary L. Doyle, Squadron Signal Publications, 1979. Out of print, but stocks may still be available if you check around.

German Language

Die PzKpfw 35(t) und 38(t) und ihre Abartern, Walter J., Spielberger, Motorbuch Verlag, 1980. Available wherever the Motorbuch Verlag Series is sold.

Kraftfahrzeuge und Panzer der Reichwehr Whermacht und Bundeswehr, 11 auflage, Motorbuch Verlag, 1982.

Munition Für Das sIG 33, Waffen Ruvue Nr. 57, pages 9141 through 9160, Journal Verlag, II Quartal 1985. Relatively rare. Poke around in used book stores or contact the publisher.

Mini Men

Kirin

**U.S. COBRA GUNSHIP PILOTS,
KIT NUMBER 25008**

Kirin is the first company to make figures for the new lines of 1/35 helicopter kits with the release of two sets of two figures each. The first set provides two All-1 Cobra pilots molded by Paul Keefe Jr. to compliment the new MRC kit of the AH-1W SuperCobra. Both pilots are in standing poses with right arms raised and Mr. Keefe's posing intends them to be giving each other the "high five" right after climbing out of the Cobra's cockpit.

One figure has his helmet under his left arm and is wearing sun glasses, while the other has his helmet on with the visor in the down position. Both wear the USN pattern one piece NOMEX coverall flight suit and both have shoulder holsters containing their weapons. The one with his helmet off is wearing an aviator's survival vest with full pouches and a K-Bar type knife in its sheath. The helmeted pilot has a modern style flak

vest which would suggest this guy sits up front and is therefore, the gunner. The pilot scales out to 5 foot 9 inches to the top of his flat-top haircut, and the gunner is about the same height if you allow for his helmet.

The parts for both figures are molded in tan resin. They go together without problem, the helmet under the arm of the pilot being the



trickiest piece to position. Both are virtually bubble free, so preparation for painting should not take much time. The only mold problems of note are several small snaps on the helmets that are not sharp and clear.

Kirin follows the popular trend of no instructions or paint guides other than a color photo of a painted pilot pair on the box cover. This may be fine for some modelers, but we bet Kirin could sell more kits if complete painting instructions were to be found inside the box on a piece of paper. Check your Desert Storm references for color pictures of USMC pilots for additional color help.

Conversion possibilities are a bit limited. You can add the commonly used camouflaged cloth cover to the helmets with some putty. And you could modify the coverall pockets a bit. So, even if you do not intend to build MRC's AH-1W kit to make a diorama backdrop for these guys, Kirin's two Snake drivers are competent stand alone military figures. The two of them mounted

on a base come close to a vignette you can build, and either one could be mounted singly to good effect. Don't miss this chance to model these bad dudes from one of the Marine's elite helicopter units.

**U.S. COBRA GUNSHIP GROUND CREW,
KIT NUMBER 25009**

Kirin's continues its support of the MRC Cobra kit with a box of two USMC helicopter armorers posed loading TOW missiles into the wing launchers. One crewman is kneeling while holding a TOW missile tube and giving "thumbs up" with his left hand. The other is standing while loading a TOW round. Again sculpted by Paul Keefe Jr. the quality of this kit and its features are essentially the same as the Cobra Pilots kit. Both TOW missile tubes in our review sample were warped slightly and both had a couple of big bubble holes that needed filling. Other than that these two soldiers are every bit as good as the pilot set.

Both crewmen are wearing flak jackets in the modern style, and both come with gas mask bags to mount on the left thigh. They both have "Fritz" helmets but the standing figure differs in having a scarf around his neck. The standing figure is about 5 feet 4 inches tall in scale.

One of the TOW rounds provided has the protective end caps removed and this one should be mounted on the standing figure. We weren't crazy about the way this round is held by the figure since a real missile tube weighs about 55 pounds and this guy doesn't look strong enough to hold it up the way





Kirin has done it. We suggest you try to mount the left arm with the hand down lower so the missile tube is held in a more horizontal position. You'll have to fiddle with the right hand position to do this.

Both figures require that you attach the upper torso to the lower body at a waist joint but this will need some putty on the kneeling guy. Also, when you mount his right arm and the TOW tube, be careful to position the tube so it helps keep him from falling over on his

resin face. The built up shown here has the tube touching the right knee, but I think you should try to get it to mount flat on the ground as



German Paratroopers



shown on the box top photo. This will put some space between the knee and the bottom end cap on the TOW tube if done correctly.

Painting is handicapped a bit by the lack of instructions. You should be able to overcome this limitation since both crewmen are wearing standard issue BDU uniforms which are shown in many references. If you can't find one of these, try your local Military Surplus store to see a copy of the real thing. Kirin's artist has shown the NATO green leaf pattern BDU's which were used in Desert Storm until the "Chocolate Chip" camo pattern uniforms were issued. Either color combination is suitable as a result.

Kirin's helicopter crewmen are a nice compliment to the pilot figures and if you combine both sets with the helicopter kit, you are well on the way to a diorama. These can also be used as stand alone figures if you want, and conversion is as simple as painting them in Army camouflage BDUs instead of Marine patterns. You could even convert them into Grunts by adding weapons and

equipment, and if you don't build helicopters at all, they could be the starting point for a Bradley crew. However, if you do a helicopter diorama, you could throw in a HUMVee with a cargo bed full of TOW rounds or you could research and build a FARRP (Forward Air Refueling and Rearm Point). Any of these projects are worthy reasons to go stick your fingers together building Kirin's nice figure kits. So go do it!



DML

FOLLOWING CLOSE ON THE HEELS OF THEIR LAST releases, DML has produced several additional figure sets in their 39-45 series. All are an excellent value for the buck at \$6.50.

WAFFEN SS TANK CREW, KIT NUMBER 6014

The tank crew set is composed of five figures, four of which are designed to fit into the vehicle of your choice. The fifth figure is a standing officer holding a machine pistol.

The tank pictured on the box top appears to be a Jagdpanzer L70 or a Zwischen Lösung. [DML plans release of a *Zwischen Lösung* in 1994—Ed] The figures represented are of the late war type—with M43 caps and camouflage uniforms.

Assembly was extremely straightforward, there was much less flash present than on other DML figure sets.

One of the more interesting and innovative features is the inclusion of photo-etched brass to represent the headsets and throat mikes. The ear pieces of the headsets

SS Tank Crew



are separate plastic parts and each comes with an indentation of an ear to allow it to fit neatly onto the figures head. The box art illustrates quite well how the individual earphones and throat mikes should be wired.

One slight goof, the ear indentations run the wrong direction to place the ear pads up and down—the position needed to engage the etched parts. The hats needed some trimming in order for the etched bands to fit onto the ear pads, and the outer pads needed slight trimming as well.

Are we holding injection molded figures to too high a standard? You bet. When the quality of detail and sculpting is this high, we think you have to. All this is not too much of a problem as it is hardly visible when painted.

All in all this set is very nice. The standing figure was our least favorite, his pose being very stiff and awkward. We're picky on this point, however, and most folks would find it easy to correct with a snip here and there.

The photo-etched mikes alone would be cause enough to buy this set in quantity, as if the quality alone wasn't incentive to do that!

Suggested References: *Waffen SS Uniforms, in colour photographs* (Windrow & Greene, London); *Osprey Men-at-Arms, #24; The Panzer Divisions (Revised Edition).*

GERMAN FALLSCHIRMJAGER, KIT NUMBER 6005

Like the earlier Normandy SS Infantry, this set provides a variety of action packed poses. These guys are definitely in a scrappy mood!

Another thing we like about the DML sets, is they are just that—sets. Each figure relates to the other. Sort of like instant diorama. Some of the figures were a bit ambitious for the medium, injection plastic not really lending itself to severe and dramatic poses. But again, we are being intentionally picky.

As in previous sets, the weapons are of a very high standard. Along with an MP 40 and a KAR 98, a FG 42 is also provided. Previous sets had some problems with rather under-developed equipment and this appears to have been remedied. The water bottle is especially convincing—complete with rivets.

Although said to represent troops at Monte Cassino, very minor modifications would create the earlier paratroopers of Eban Emal and Crete. How about riders for Tamiya's new Tiger? The main areas to



change would be the tunic and the front lace boots. The earlier jump tunics had some slight differences and the early style boots zipped up the side, rather than lacing up the front. Additionally, the FG 42 was not in service until 1942 (duh!). If you are interested in the subject, there has been little to work with in the past. Tamiya's old German paratroopers were hopeless.

Suggested references: *German Parachute Forces 1935-45* by Brian Davis (out of print and a little hard to find), and *Osprey Men-at-Arms Series # 139; German Airborne Troops 1939-45* by Bruce Quarrie.

U.S. ARMY AIRBORNE (NORMANDY 1944), KIT NUMBER 6010

This set was not the favorite set of the MMiR staff. Some of us found the poses to be a little stiff and our most picky staffer thought the boots of all the figures were a little malformed. However, these will be minor points with most modelers.

This set is like the earlier Fallschirmjager set, in that these guys look

really mad! All of the poses depict men in combat. We all got a kick out of this. It fits the traditional image of the "Screamin' Eagles" well. One figure is even depicted with the "Eagle Mohawk" haircut of the Normandy jumps.

Even if the subject matter doesn't quite pique your interest, this set will still be extremely useful at filling the niche that has existed in 1/35th U.S. equipment. All we've had in the past to work with was the old Tamiya stuff or the oversized 32nd scale Airfix items. All the most common personal equip-



ment is represented in the DML set. Dressing pouches, kit bags, ruck sacks, shovels, canteens, etc. And all of it is on the money.

As in previous DML sets, the weapons are excellent. An M1 carbine with the folding stock is represented, as is a well done M1 Garand with a bayonet fixed.

References: you can't beat the *Militaria Magazine* Specials numbers 22/23. Available in the bound volumes too. Also check out the Osprey Elite Series # 31, *US Army Airborne 1940-90*.

CROSS OF IRON, EASTERN 1944, KIT NUMBER 6006

This set was the most popular set amongst our staff. Some thought that they were the nicest 1/35th scale figures they had ever seen, and the general consensus was that they are definitely the nicest set ever done in plastic.

Billed as the "Cross of Iron," this appears to be a reference to Sam Peckinpah's film about combat on the Eastern front. The four figures all represent Whermacht troops of the period after 1943, as they all wear the later style uniform, and one is armed with the Stug 44 assault rifle. Two of the figures carry the Russian PPSH sub-machine gun and ammo pouches. This was very common amongst German soldiers of the time.

There are some really good action poses going on here. This continues the theme of "really P.O.'ed soldiers" from DML. One of the figures depicts an officer, with riding pants and high boots. He looks a little like James Coburn too! The others wear the standard Whermacht late war uniform.

There are lots of very nice little details present. Hands grip weapons and grenades. Grenades and other items tuck into belts and boots. One figure's arm is bandaged. And the facial expressions really convey a bunch of angry hombres.

As with other DML sets you will want to pick up extras. In addition to being able to use the equipment and weapons for other projects, the heads would also be useful. The conversion possibilities are virtually endless. The figures in this set could depict any Whermacht troops after 1943. Combined with other sets even SS troops could be depicted.

For reference on these and other German WWII figures, check out Andrew Mollo's excellent *Uniforms of the Armed Forces of World War II*.

Hornet Miniatures

It's been tough to find a Hornet figure lately. It seems like they're never in the shops. We heard that the partnership of Roger Saunders and Nic Adams, which made up the Hornet line, was a thing of the past. Then we heard they were back together. Nic Adams by the way, was the one responsible for all of the neat little kits in the Hornet line, like the German bicycle and the British "Para-scooter."

Apparently, the U.S. manufacturing of Hornet is also a thing of the past. But, we have heard lately that *Marco Polo Imports* is now bringing the line into the states. This is definitely good news for fans of this terrific line of figures.

Mr. Saunders is one of the most talented figure sculptors around and he is one of the very few who has turned his attention to 1/35th scale.

There are three new releases (at least the ones we could find out about), they are: GH17 **Russian in Whermacht Service** (unfortunately, we were unable to get a sample for review); GH18 **Seated German Soldier**; and GH16 **German Soldier Gesturing**.

We have seen photos of the Russian, GH17. It is a very nice little figure, posed with its arms hanging over a PPSH machine gun. The tunic is that worn by the "Russian Army of Liberation," but it wouldn't take much to convert him into a German Infantryman of the post '43 period.

GH18, the seated soldier, is a welcome addition to the line. He can be used in all sorts of vehicle situations. His arms are posed in a sort of generic "hands-on" position which would lend itself to an almost infinite variety of poses.

In the French and Polish campaigns, Panzer commanders were often seen in the field wearing their standard Whermacht uniforms, rather than the typical Panzer black. GH18 would look great in this role, perched on the back of a cupola, or in a hatch.

GH16 is posed pointing with his arm extended, palm facing forward. This is an interesting pose, with the neck of the figure sculpted to show the subject's head looking directly along the line of his arm. A Kar 98 rifle is included and it fits well into his left hand. This hand is sculpted open, which allows you to gently squeeze the hand over the gun for very realistic effect.

The figure is not wearing web gear,



which is a little disappointing, as he seems like the typical infantryman. This figure is essentially a conversion (albeit a clever one) of the earlier Whermacht Infantryman leaning on a shovel. There is certainly nothing wrong with this, but it would have been nice to see an all new figure.

Both figures have an SS eagle on their left arms. This is a nice touch for those who might want to model such a figure. Those who don't can simply file it away.

For reference on Panzer commander's wearing the field gray uniform, check out Jean Paul Pallud's *Blitzkrieg in the West*, from *After the Battle Publications*.

The U.S. retail on the figures is \$10.95.



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